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SIKH-AFGHAN RELATIONSHIP

Jaspal Kaur*

The tripolar contest between the Mughals, Afghans and the Sikhs in the mid-eighteenth century marks an important phase in the rise of Sikh power in Punjab. Till the 1740s the Sikhs had to struggle against the repressive policy of the Mughal government. To this was added the threat, foreign in nature, of the Afghans under Ahmad Shah Abdali from across the borders. How did this effect the fortunes of the Sikhs ? It has been stated that Abdali was 'indirectly largely responsible for the ultimate success of the Sikhs and his career in India is very intimately a part of the Sikh struggle for independence¹ and exercised a very decisive influence in the history of the rise of Sikh power.'²

In the paper an attempt is made to analyse the evidence provided by Rattan Singh Bhangu on the Sikh-Afghan relations in the *Panth Prakash*.³ As the purpose of the *Panth Prakash* was to throw light on the rise of the Sikhs as a political power, this study becomes all the more relevant. What was Bhangu's concept of causation with respect to the Sikh-Afghan struggle? How did this struggle change the character of the Sikh movement and what was its result, ultimately are some of the questions to which answers are sought in this paper.

At the outset, it may be pointed out that the purpose of Bhangu is not to give a detailed narrative on the invasions of Abdali but to throw light on them in the context of the rising power of the Sikhs. Therefore his information is not very comprehensive and complete but leaves out certain important details. Further, he does not give an account of all invasions of Abdali but narrates only the first, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh invasions. Neither is Bhangu interested in the effect of these invasions on Afghanistan or the rest of India. His purpose is to narrate them in the context of the history of Punjab in general and that of the Sikhs in particular.

The death of Zakariya Khan, the subedar of Lahore in 1745, was followed by feud between his sons Yahya Khan and Shah Nawaz Khan for acquiring the subedari which ultimately fell to the former. Within one year Yahya was supplanted by his younger brother Shah Nawaz. The disputes for succession and the appearance of a foreign invader, Ahmad Shah Abdali

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1. N.K.Sinha, *Rise of the Sikh Power* (Calcutta, 1960), p.11.

2. *Ibid.*, p.10.

3. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *Panth Prakash* (Edited by Balwant Singh Dhillon under the title of *Sri Guru Panth Prakash* (Amritsar 2004), p.305.

were decisive factors in the rise of Sikh power.

Though Bhangu is writing in 1841, his approach to causation is medieval. Divine will or divine retribution is thus given its due importance. 'What happened in history was decided by God; human beings were merely the instruments of change ordained by him.' Therefore divine will prevails to punish Shah Nawaz and Lakhpat Rai Diwan, in the form of the first invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali.³ Lakhpat Rai was primarily held responsible for the '*chhota ghallughara*' in which nearly seven thousand Sikhs had been killed on the banks of the river Ravi, north of Lahore and nearly three thousand had been taken to Lahore as prisoners and executed at Shahidganj. Thereafter many restrictions were also placed on the Sikhs. Metaphorically speaking Bhangu thus states that just as a thorn like needle is needed to remove a thorn, so also to remove the Turks (Mughals), Turks (Afghans) had been sent by God.

However, besides this, a more rational interpretation for Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasion has also been indirectly referred to by Bhangu. He states that Abdali and his son Timur Shah had visited Delhi alongwith Nadir Shah in 1739⁴ and since then Abdali's heart was in Delhi.⁵ He had seen with his own eyes, "the weakness of the empire, the imbecility of the Emperor, the inattention of the ministers, the spirit of independence which had crept up among the grandeurs."⁶

Bhangu gives quite a comprehensive account of the first invasion of Abdali. He states that Shah Nawaz Khan and Lakhpat Rai joined hands with Abdali.⁷ After capturing Lahore, Abdali marched to Sirhind and looted the Mughal treasury. Near Sirhind, at Maunpur, (places not mentioned by Rattan Singh Bhangu) the battle between Abdali and the Mughals was fought. The Mughal army was led by Wazir Qamar-ud-din, supported by the rulers of Jaipur viz. Raja Ishri Singh, to be joined later by the Prince Shahzada Ahmad Shah.⁸ During the course of the battle, Bhangu correctly states that

4. This is corroborated by Hari Ram Gupta, *A History of the Sikhs (1739-1799)*, (Shimla, 1952) p.40; Harbans Singh (editor-in-Chief), *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol.IA-D, p.11; and N.K.Sinha, *op.cit.*, p.10.

5. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.303.

6. *Siyar-ul-muntakherin*, Vol.III, p.382, as quoted by N.K.Sinha, *op.cit.*, p.10.

7. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.303. Bhangu does not state however that it was Shah Nawaz who invited Abdali to invade India. Further Shah Nawaz had usurped the subedari of Lahore from his elder brother Yahya Khan and was now apprehensive about his action. So he sought help from a foreign quarter. Further it is stated by Dr. Ganda Singh that Shah Nawaz in seeking help from Abdali was following the example of the usurpers of Viceroys of the Deccan and Bengal subas in seeking help from foreigners. This does not appear to be historically correct however. For, Shah Nawaz Khan is seeking help in 1747 while the above mentioned Viceroys are seeking foreign help from the French and the English at a later period. For ref. See Ganda Singh, *Ahmad Shah Durrani*, (Bombay, 1959), p.40.

8. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.304. Bhangu has wrongly given the name of the ruler of Jaipur as Raja Madho Singh. In fact, Raja Madho Singh was the ruler of Jaipur between 1751-68. Raja Ishri Singh was the ruler of Jaipur between 1743-50.

the Wazir Qamar-ud-din was fatally wounded by a cannon ball from an Afghan gun.⁹ Thereafter Mir Mannu occupied Lahore and also imprisoned Lakhpat Rai.

Lakhpat Rai was severely rebuked for his role in the '*chhotta ghallughara*' and getting the Sikhs massacred, some of whom had been his own employees. He was subject to brutal tortures by Diwan Kaura Mal whom Bhangu does not hesitate to call a *gursikh*.¹⁰ This was divine retribution as interpreted by Bhangu. According to other sources, Ahmad Shah Abdali was harassed by some of the Sikh Sardars, one of whom was Charat Singh Sukerchakia who made several surprise attacks upon the Abdalis rear as far as Indus and relieved him of a number of horses and other booty.¹¹ Surprisingly Bhangu is silent on this point.

The first invasion of Abdali gave the Sikhs an opportunity to take advantage of the confusion and chaos prevailing in the Punjab. The episode of the '*chhota ghallughara*' and the first invasion of Abdali must have taught the Sikhs a lesson. How long could they fight from the shelter of jungles without adequate alternate arrangements? The Sikhs felt that there was a dire need for establishing some sort of shelter or fort from where they could offer some challenge to the enemy, instead of running away to the jungles. Bhangu states that after a lot of discussion it was decided to build the fort at Amritsar. Its foundation was laid near the Ramsar Sarovar. This site was chosen because it was considered as sacred and it was believed that any Sikh who happened to die there would go straight to heaven.¹²

During the construction of the fort called Ram Rauni, the egalitarian spirit amongst the eighteenth century Sikhs is vividly portrayed by Bhangu. He states that the Sikhs themselves were the masons, carpenters and labourers with no caste difference and built the fort with great speed and enthusiasm.¹³ Bhangu is thus conscious of the social revolution brought by the institution of Khalsa. A deep and wide ditch, '*rauni*', was excavated around the fort, which could accommodate about five hundred people.¹⁴

9. *Ibid.*, p.304.

10. *Ibid.*

11. Bakht Mal, *Khalsa Nama*, p.32, as quoted by Ganda Singh, *op.cit.*, p.70; J.D.Cunningham, *History of the Sikhs*, (New Delhi, 1990), p.85. Hari Ram Gupta is of the view that to say that the Sikhs kept up the pursuit to the Indus seems rather inflated. At this state of their power they could not thrust themselves in the midst of hostile population. For ref. see. *op.cit.*, p.47.f.n.

12. The dominance of the religious factor is very prominent in the writing of Bhangu. The religious sanctity provided by Amritsar made it the right choice for the Sikhs as is argued by Bhangu, for ref. See *op.cit.*, p.306.

13. *Ibid.*, ਆਪੇ ਰਾਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪੇ ਮਜ਼ੂਰ.

14. Hari Ram Gupta states that the fort was built in March-April 1747 i.e. before the invasion of Abdali. For ref. See, *op.cit.*, p.36. However Ganda Singh is of the view that it was built in 1748. For ref. See, *Diwan Kaura Mal* (Punjabi), p.44; J.D.Cunningham also states it was during the invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali that the Sikhs had thrown up a fort called 'Ram Rauni'. For ref. See, *History of the Sikhs*, (New Delhi, 1990), p.307.

As soon as the news about the fort reached Mir Mannu (who had become the Subedar of Lahore), he immediately sent an army under Adina Beg, Sadiq Beg, Diwan Kaura Mal and also some hill rajas to lay siege to the fort. The Sikhs put up a brave front for they did not fear death which incidentally brought them martyrdom.¹⁵ Meanwhile Shah Nawaz Khan (claimant for subedari) invaded Multan with his forces and captured it. Mir Mannu and Adina Beg were advised by Kaura Mal to make peace with the Sikhs as he could ill afford a war on two fronts.¹⁶

As pointed out by Bhangu, to win over the Sikhs, half of the revenues of Patti were assigned to them, alongwith twelve villages of Guru Chak near Ram Rauni.¹⁷ Perhaps Mir Mannu had come to realise the increasing strength of the Sikhs. Political circumstances also favoured the rise of the Sikhs as the subedars of Lahore had little hope of receiving any help from Delhi and had confront the Sikhs single handedly.

Bhangu, in the very next episode, is quick to state that the efforts of Kaura Mal in seeking goodwill of the Sikhs bore fruit. The Sikhs joined the forces of Kaura Mal (initially with some distrust). The combined forces were successful in capturing Multan and defeating and killing Shah Nawaz who had wronged the Sikhs in many ways. Assisting Mir Mannu in capturing Multan must have kindled in the hearts of the Sikhs, the desire to capture territories for themselves one day.

Bhangu makes no mention of the second invasion of Abdali. He makes an attempt to analyse the political context in which the third invasion of Abdali takes place but is not very successful as he mixes up the third and fourth invasions. He states that Abdali invaded India on the invitation of Najib-ud-doulah which is incorrect¹⁸ (actually, this was the case in the fourth invasion). He further states that after capturing Lahore and Sirhind, Abdali had freed Delhi from Marathas which again is incorrect.¹⁹ So the political context in which Abdali invades India for the third time is not given correctly by Bhangu. We know from other sources that the real reason for

15. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.307.

ਤਬ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਬਾਤ ਬਿਚਾਰੀ
ਤੁਰਕਨ ਪਾਈ ਹਮ ਪੈ ਭਾਰੀ
ਹੋਵੇ ਬਹੀਦ ਐ ਤੁਰਕਨ ਮਾਰੈ।

16. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.309; Col. Polier states that the siege of Ram Rauni was lifted because of corruption on the part of Kaura Mal. For ref. See 'The writings of Colonel Polier On the Sikhs 1776-1802' in *Sicques, Tigers or Thieves*, edited by Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh, (New York, 2004), p.78. However George Forster opines that Kaura Mal in fact assisted the Sikhs as he himself was of their sect and divested Mir Mannu from reaping the full fruits of the superiority he had gained. For ref. See Amandeep Singh Madra and Paramjit Singh (Edited), *op.cit.*, p.143.

17. Hari Ram Gupta mentions that one-fourth of the revenues were assigned. For ref. See *op.cit.*, p.62.

18. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.312.

19. Actually it was during the fourth invasion of Abdali that Ghazi-ud-din, with the help of the Marathas had removed Najib-ud-doulah, Abdali's agent, from Delhi.

the third invasion of Abdali was the non-payment of revenue of *charmahals* by Mir Mannu, as had been agreed upon at the end of the second invasion.

As Mir Mannu was not in a position to get any help from Delhi, efforts were made by Diwan Kaura Mal to placate the Sikhs. The Sikhs, if they agreed were to be given help in the form of weapons and also money, provided they sent back Abdali. An army of thirty thousand Sikhs agreed to help the Mughals. However, about ten thousand of them under the command of Hari Singh Bhangu quarrelled with the rest (because of differences with the Ramgarhia misl) and went back.²⁰ The Sikhs encamped at Shalimar Bagh near Lahore. They were maltreated by the people of Lahore as perhaps they were averse to having the Sikhs in the city.²¹

Bhangu does not give us the complete details of the third invasion of Abdali but makes mention of a skirmish which one of the Sikh leaders viz. Sukha Singh of Mari Kamboh had with the Afghan troops. Sukha Singh was under the wrong impression that Ahmad Shah Abdali himself was commanding the troops and made desperate efforts to get at him. Ultimately he was killed in this skirmish against the Afghans.²² After the fight the Sikhs returned to their *dera* in Majha. Bhangu analyses this Sikh-Mughal joint venture as a failure, in fact it taught the Sikhs that any future friendship with the Mughals would spell a loss for them.²³

While giving his account on the third invasion of Abdali, Bhangu concentrates more in telling his readers about the bravery of the Sikhs and their readiness for sacrificing their lives. He further states that Mir Mannu was defeated by Abdali²⁴ who then, also conquered Delhi and appointed Najib-ud-doula. Thus Mughal rule ended in Punjab and Delhi. But this is not wholly correct because Delhi was not conquered in this invasion.²⁵

Though not much information is given by Bhangu on the fourth invasion of Abdali but he throws some light on the Sikh struggle in the intervening period between the fourth and fifth invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali. Before retiring from India after his fourth invasion, Abdali had appointed his son, Timur Shah, as the subedar of the Punjab and Jahan Khan as his Naib. But in spite of his best efforts, Timur failed to keep order and peace in the province and ultimately had to flee to Kabul.

In one of the episodes Bhangu narrates how the Sikhs helped Adina Beg to drive the Afghans out of Jalandhar Doab. Adina Beg had annoyed

20. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.313.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Giani Gian Singh in his *Panth Prakash* states that Sukha Singh was killed in the battle of Mahmud Buti. But Ganda Singh accepts the view of Rattan Singh Bhangu and says that he is more reliable as his father and uncle in-law were present in this skirmish. For ref. See., *op.cit.*, p.107.

23. *Ibid.*, p.315.

24. *Ibid.*, After taking fifty lacs from Mir Mannu (in other sources it is mentioned as thirty lacs) Abdali appointed him as Subedar of Lahore on his behalf.

25. *Ibid.*, p.307.

Jahan Khan by not attending his court at Lahore and in fear of retaliation had fled to the hills. He then appealed to the Sikhs under their leaders Sodhi Wadbhag Singh and Jassa Singh Ahluwalia to help him against the Afghans.²⁶ A bloody battle took place between the rival forces in December 1757²⁷ at a place called Mahilpur in Hoshiarpur district.²⁸ Afghan army was defeated by the combined forces. Therefore Bhangu states that Adina Beg made the Sikhs co-sharers in the revenue administration.²⁹

The Afghans lost their dominant position in Jalandhar Doab and they would never regain it. This defeat of the Afghans marks a significant stage in the rise of the Sikhs to political power. Flushed by their victory the Sikhs attacked the Afghans everywhere and not even the neighbourhood of Lahore was safe.

Bhangu also refers to the Maratha invasion of Punjab which began about the end of February 1758. He makes a particular reference to the attack on Sirhind which was under the Afghan representative of Ahmad Shah Abdali viz., Abdus Samad Khan. On the advice of Adina Beg, the Marathas enlisted the support of the Sikhs and their combined forces attacked Sirhind. The Afghans finding their position untenable took to flight.

The Sikhs, in particular, had a strong grievance against Sirhind because the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh had been butchered here. So they plundered Sirhind to their heart's content. Then it was subject to pillage by the Marathas.³⁰

The Sikhs and the Marathas reached Lahore with their armies. Timur Shah found it prudent to vacate Lahore and run away. Thus as confirmed by Bhangu, Lahore and Multan were made free of the Afghans. No Afghan was left in these provinces.

We know from other sources that the Marathas, after appointing Adina Beg as the subedar of Lahore, retired. For the Sikhs, as stated by Bhangu, it was an opportune moment to establish their supremacy. They started building forts and collecting revenue. The Mughals were made to realise that without the help of the Sikhs, they could not face the Afghan attack successfully.

The information provided in the account of Bhangu is evident of the

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*, p.318. Date given by Rattan Singh Bhangu is accurate.

28. The name of the place is not mentioned by Rattan Singh Bhangu.

29. *Ibid.*, p.322. However this is not confirmed by other sources. S.S. Gandhi states that the Sikhs began to collect tribute from the people of Doab in the name of *Karah prasad*, but he has not cited the source. For ref. See, *Sikhs in the Eighteenth Century* (Amritsar, 1999), p.222.

30. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.* This loot and plunder of Sirhind by the Sikhs and Marathas is confirmed by Hari Ram Gupta who quoting from *Tarikh-i-Alamgir Sani* states that "as the Marathas and Sikhs knew nothing but plundering, so they thoroughly looted the inhabitants of Sirhind, high and low, that none either, male or female, had a cloth on his or her person left and pulled down the houses and carried off the timber.

fact that the Sikhs had become important players in the game of acquiring sovereignty in Punjab politics which was in a state of flux. That the help of the Sikhs was being sought by the Mughals and the Marathas to drive away the Afghans from the Punjab, is evident of the martial and fighting qualities of the Sikhs. Further, it must have strengthened the desire of the Sikhs to become rulers of the state of Punjab in the near future. The Sikhs, no doubt, had come a long way within a short time. It was till 1745 roughly, that they were being hunted out and killed. Not only did they survive this persecution but by 1758, they had gained in military strength to such an extent that their help was being sought by the Marathas and Mughals to drive away the Afghans. Not only this, like the Marathas their help was also being sought in the intercenine warfare between the states of Jaisalmer and Bikaner.³¹ Undoubtedly they had become a power to reckon with. The Guru's propheny metaphorically speaking to make eagles from sparrows, was proving to be true.

Bhangu's account on the fifth invasion of Abdali which culminated in the battle of Panipat is brief and precise. The manner in which the Sikhs harrassed Ahmad Shah Abdali and his soldiers on their way back and lightened much of their spoils is not mentioned by Bhangu. The capture of Lahore by the Sikhs in 1761 and the minting of coins to mark this occasion are ignored by Bhangu.³²

The defeat of the Marathas in the battle of Panipat in 1761 paved the way for the rise of the Sikh power in the Punjab. What emerges from the *Panth Prakash* of Bhangu is that till the fifth invasion of Abdali the political struggle in Punjab was four cornered—Sikhs, Mughals, Afghans and Marathas. After the battle of Panipat it was reduced to a contest between the Sikhs and Afghans.³³ And in this contest, the Sikhs would win as Punjab rightfully belonged to them. Bhangu's logic is very simple. The Sikhs were the sons of the soil whereas the Afghans were alien to Punjab. Therefore the wealth of Punjab could not be looted by Abdali as it belonged to the Sikhs.³⁴ Was Bhangu trying to convey to the British that they, being foreigners, as well, had no legitimate rights to take over Punjab?

The account of the sixth invasion of Abdali is narrated by Bhangu in the context of the *wadda ghallughara*. Giving the reasons for the sixth invasion, Bhangu states that it was the Sikhs' harassment of the Afghan forces that enraged Abdali.³⁵ In fact, the Sikhs had passed a *gurmata* to plunder and conquer the territory under Afghan control,³⁶ and therefore

31. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.329.

32. Both are important events in the rise of the Sikhs to power and it is difficult to ascertain why Rattan Singh Bhangu chose to ignore them.

33. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.338. It was with the grace of God that the Khalsa power had increased to that extent.

34. *Ibid.*, 'ਉਹ ਹੋ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਹਮ ਭੂਮੀਏ'।

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*

Abdali wanted to teach them a lesson.

Abdali began his sixth invasion with the reoccupation of Lahore which forced the Sikhs who had their families with them to move southwards to places of safety. They finally encamped at Raikot near Malerkotla. Moving very swiftly from Lahore, Abdali surprised the Sikhs by his sudden appearance. The Sikhs were accompanied by a large number of non-combatants, known as *bahir*, consisting of old men, women and children. Hence they could not indulge in their favourite hit and run tactics as the Abdali forced them in a face to face combat.

Bhangu has given us a comprehensive and minute account of this struggle of the Sikhs with the Afghans which he has termed as the *ghallughara*.³⁷ Abdali was supported by Zain Khan, subedar of Sirhind and the Pathans of Malerkotla. Bhangu makes mention of the vakils of Malwa Sardars such as Sangu Singh (the agent of the *bhais* of Kaithal), Sekhu Singh Membalwala (the agent of Sardar Ala Singh) who were asked to take the *bahir* to places of safety. When the *bahir* had hardly gone three miles, the Afghan forces fell upon them. The Sikh soldiers put their *bahir* in the centre and moved on fighting the Afghans. Though they were outnumbered yet they fought bravely and tirelessly for the sake of *parswarth* i.e. to protect the life and honour of the *bahir* and for the glory and prestige of the *panth*.³⁸

Bhangu uses this episode to bring out the bravery and unique fighting skills of Sikh Sardars like Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Charhat Singh.³⁹ In fact, Charhat Singh became very famous as a gun fighter after this episode. Bhangu makes mention of two *birs* of *Guru Granth Sahib* which were also present there during this struggle. He hints at the fact that there was a *jatha* from Amritsar carrying the Amritsar *Bir* and a *jatha* from Damdama carrying the *Damdami Bir*.⁴⁰ Both were separated by the forces of Abdali.

The Sikhs moved on fighting and arrived first at village Gahal and then at Qutba and Bahmani which belonged to the hostile Afghans of Malerkotla, under whose instruction the *Ranghar* villagers subjected the Sikhs to plunder and massacre. Charhat Singh rushed to the rescue of the Sikhs and killed many of the *Ranghars*. By that time, the Sikh cordon had been pierced by the Afghan forces at many points and they inflicted heavy loss of life amongst the Sikhs especially the non-combatants.⁴¹ Abdali alongwith his troops had traversed a hundred kilometers in a very short time and after fighting incessantly with the Sikhs was tired and so the fight was called off.

37. *Ibid.*, p.342. Bhangu's father and uncle were present in the *ghallughara* and he had heard all the details from them.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*, pp.343-346.

40. *Ibid.*, p.346.

41. *Ibid.*, p.347.

Though Bhangu fails to give the exact date of the *ghallughara*, we know from other sources that it took place on 6th Feb. 1762. The number of Sikhs who were killed in the *ghallughara* was a matter of dispute and that was admitted even by Bhangu.⁴² To him the number was thirty thousand as told to him by his father and uncle. In fact, no Sikh who took part in the *ghallughara* escaped unhurt. For Bhangu, those who lost their lives had become *shahid*. For an emerging community like the Sikhs, the loss of lives in such a great number, must have been tremendous. But the Sikhs were not to be disheartened. Bhangu states that the Sikhs were confident and in high spirits and believed that the alloy was gone in the *ghallughara* and those who survived were the *tat khalsa*.⁴³

Thereafter on his return Ahmad Shah Abdali blew up the *Harimandir* at Amritsar with gunpowder. Bhangu has wrongly stated that Abdali destroyed the *Harimandir* before the *ghallughara*.

If we try to analyse the actual reasons behind the *ghallughara* it is not an easy task. In spite of the massive triumph of Abdali against Marathas at Panipat in 1761 the Afghan power could not take roots in Punjab, mainly because of the rising power of the Sikhs. Abdali perceived this Sikh challenge as a potential threat to his establishing sovereignty in Punjab and perhaps that prompted him to take such a drastic action against the Sikhs. But was he successful in crushing the power of the Sikhs? Perhaps no, for within three months of the *ghallughara*, the Sikhs did not allow *diwan* Lakshmi Narayan of the suba of Sirhind to collect revenue from the suba and, in fact, his fleeing army was looted by the Sikhs.⁴⁴ This is evident of the fact that the *ghallughara* only strengthened the determination of the Sikhs to fight and exterminate the Afghans.

Bhangu even makes mention of an attempt made by Abdali to enter into some truce with the Sikhs through the mediation of Ala Singh of Patiala, so that the Sikhs would stop plundering the territories under his control. But the Sikhs declined the offer.

42. *Ibid.*, p.348. Different figures are given for the loss of Sikh lives (i) Tahmas Khan, *Qissa-I-Tahmas-I-Miskin* or *Tahmas Nama*, translated by Irfan Habib in *Sikh History from Persian Sources* (Edited by J.S.Grewal and Irfan Habib, New Delhi, 2001), gives the number of Sikhs slain as twenty five thousand, p.182. (It is important to note that the author himself was present on the scene). (ii) Ganda Singh, *Ahmad Shah Durrani* (Bombay, 1959). He gives the number as ten thousand by following the information as given by Rattan Singh Bhangu. But here there appears to be a misrepresentation of facts. In fact, a correct analysis of Bhangu's information reveals that though people claimed that about fifty thousand Sikhs had been killed, on the authority of his father and uncle he actually put the figure at thirty thousand. (iii) Hari Ram Gupta, *op.cit.*, p.174. He puts the figure at twelve thousand. (iv) Harbans Singh (Ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* (Patiala, 1995), p.12. Here it is stated that about 25,000 Sikhs were killed, (v) George Forster, *A Journey from Bengal to England (1782-1783)*, Vol.I, p.319. He put the figure at twenty five thousand, (vi) John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812), p.18. He estimates the figure as upwards of twenty thousand.

43. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.338.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 359.

In order to strengthen themselves the Sikhs concentrated on their organizational skills as well. After the departure of Abdali for Afghanistan, one half of the *Dal Khalsa*, collectively called the *Buddha Dal* which included the misls of Ahluwalia, Dallewalia, Karorsinghia, Nishanwalia, Shaheed and Singhpuria confined their activities in the area across the Beas. The other five misls collectively called the *Taruna Dal* viz., Ramgarhia, Bhangi, Kanahiya, Sukerchakia and Nakai, stayed at Amritsar for the protection of the Harimandir Sahib.⁴⁵

Bhangu gives a detailed and interesting account of the sack of Kasur (which happened to be the largest Afghan pocket) by the Sikhs under their leader Hari Singh Bhangi.⁴⁶ The date as given by him is in 1760 which is not correct, the actual date being 1763.⁴⁷ When a Brahmin sought the help of the Sikhs to rescue his wife from the Kasuri Pathans, the character of the Sikhs to help people in distress prompted them to march onto Kasur. A *gurmata* was passed to defeat the Afghans and sack Kasur.⁴⁸ The Sikhs made a surprise attack on Kasur which caught the Afghans unaware. In spite being greater in numerical strength, many Pathans were put to death by the Sikhs and Kasur was plundered by them for three consecutive days. The booty of the Sikhs included gold and silver as well as Iranian and Arabian horses.

Rattan Singh Bhangu makes a significant comment on the process of occupation of territories by the Sikhs during the period of the Sikh-Afghan confrontation. In fact he names the episode as 'ਮੁਲਖ ਮੱਲਨ ਕੀ ਸਾਖੀ'.⁴⁹ which is very significant. Bhangu emphatically states that the Sikhs had actually captured territories in Punjab. No territory had been bestowed to them in jagir or otherwise. He dates the capture of territories by the Sikhs after the defeat of Bishambar Das, the *diwan* of Jalandhar doab.⁵⁰

Bhangu refers to a decision passed at the Akal bunga in Amritsar which formulated the guidelines for acquiring territories by the Sikhs.⁵¹ The phrase 'each according to his ability' was applied here. The smaller Sardars occupied small chunks of territory. While the bigger Sardars occupied big chunks of territory.⁵² Further Bhangu explicitly states that the *rayat* themselves, in some cases, called the Sikhs to occupy their territory and the latter not only obliged them but also maintained good relations with the *rayat*. However, in some cases, differences developed between the *rayat* and

45. *Ibid.*, p.360.

46. *Ibid.*, pp.360-365.

47. *Ibid.*, p.360.

48. *Ibid.*, p.363.

49. *Ibid.*, p.372.

50. Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.372, gives the date of the defeat of Bishambar Das at the hands of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia as 1761 but Hari Ram Gupta dates it as 1759. For ref. See, *op.cit.*, p.155.

51. Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.372.

52. *Ibid.*

the Sardars. If there was a dispute regarding occupation of any territory, it was settled by the big Sardars on the basis of the principle that the one who had occupied the territory first, his claim was more legitimate.⁵³

Initially the Sardars were few in number but gradually their number increased. Once they started receiving regular collections of revenue, the number of soldiers under them also increased. Bhangu explicitly states that the occupation of territories by the Sikhs signified an increase in their financial and military resources.

It will not be out of place to state the views of Bute Shah with regard to occupation of territories by the Sikhs, among them they have a custom that any place or village is deemed to belong to any one of the *Singhs* who appropriates it by throwing a piece of cloth or his whip or anything else.⁵⁴

After defeating Bishambar Das, diwan of Jalandhar Doab, members of the Buddha Dal occupied the Doab area while those of Taruna Dal acquired territories in the suburbs of Lahore in the Majha region. As a direct sequel to the occupation of territories by the Sikhs, the power of the Khalsa increased while that of the Mughals declined.⁵⁵

By 1764, as pointed out by Bhangu the Sikhs had made considerable progress, so much so that both the Turks and Afghans were afraid of the military might of the Sikhs and dared not attack them.⁵⁶ Thus, when Khwaja Ubed Khan, the subedar of Lahore, besieged Charhat Singh, the terror and awe of the Sikh military was so great that he was afraid to take any offensive action against them⁵⁷, though he was in possession of a strong artillery. In fact he was advised to take to flight before the Sikhs received help from other quarters. The reputation of the Sikhs, especially that of Charhat Singh, reached new heights, consequently. Meanwhile Gujjar Singh of Bhangi misl captured Gujarat; Sialkot was conquered by *shahidi misl*.⁵⁸ Undoubtedly, the conditions were turning in favour of the Sikhs.⁵⁹

Charhat Singh played a commendable role in ending the Afghan domination between the Indus and Chenab and proceeded even beyond the Jhelum. Sarbuland Khan shut himself up in the fort of Rohtas which was besieged by the Sikhs under Charhat Singh. After the capture of the fort Sarbuland Khan was made a prisoner but was later released by Charhat Singh.

Bhangu gives a detailed account of the defeat of Zain Khan, the

53. *Ibid.*, p.373.

54. As quoted in J.S.Grewal, *Ideology, Polity and Social Order* (New Delhi, 1996), p.97.

55. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.373.

56. That the terror of the Sikhs was increasing day by day is testified by Tahmas Khan also. For ref. See, *op.cit.*, p.183.

57. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.373.

58. *Ibid.*, p.374.

59. *Ibid.*, नम्र सिप वान धारने दिन दिन।

subedar of Sirhind and plunder of the province by the Sikhs. His father had participated in the campaign in which both the Buddha Dal and the Taruna Dal worked unitedly. Delineating on the causes of the campaign Bhangu states that the Sikhs considered Zain Khan responsible for the *wadda ghallughara* of 1762 and therefore wanted to teach him a lesson. Moreover the Sikhs, who were now conscious of their strength were eager to fulfil the wishes attributed to Guru Gobind Singh viz. to avenge the death of the younger sons (*sahibzadas*) of the Guru by destroying the fort of Sirhind.⁶⁰ A *gurmata* was passed to decide on the offensive to be taken against Zain Khan.⁶¹

On hearing the arrival of the Sikhs in the neighbourhood of Sirhind Zain Khan, who was out on a revenue collecting expedition, immediately rushed back to the city. However, he was engaged in a battle near Manhera where he was killed in Jan. 1764 (date given by Bhangu is correct).⁶² As is testified by Bhangu, the Sikhs did not ill-treat the Afghan soldiers who had surrendered.⁶³

The city of Sirhind was subjected to indiscriminate plunder while the fort was completely destroyed. The Sikhs pulled down the walls in which the *sahibzadas* had been bricked alive.⁶⁴ In commemoration of their martyrdom the Sikhs passed a resolution to build a *deora* at the place where the *sahibzadas* had been beheaded. A *gurudwara* was also decided to be built there and a Singh was to be appointed to recite *bani* from *Guru Granth Sahib*. Later Sirhind was assigned to Bhai Budha Singh.

Emboldened by their success at Sirhind, the Sikhs prepared themselves for stronger and more offensive action. Members of the Buddha Dal, desirous of marching towards Delhi plundered Hansi, Hissar, Jind, Karnal⁶⁵ and also other territories like Miranpur, Saharanpur, Muzzafarnagar, Moradabad (not mentioned by Bhangu). Members of the Taruna Dal marched towards the west and the area of Jalandhar Doab fell into the hands of the Sikhs. They then marched towards Lahore. Though Bhangu mentions the fear of the Lahorians on hearing of the Sikhs' arrival,⁶⁶ he does not state that the Sikhs invested Lahore and dictated terms to Kabuli Mal, the governor of Lahore. The domination of Sikhs was complete.

Suraj Mal, the greatest of the Jat Rajas of Bharatpur was accidentally killed on 25th Dec. 1763 in a battle with Najib-ud-doulah. His

60. *Ibid.*, p.380.

61. *Ibid.*, p.377.

62. *Ibid.*, p.379.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*, The defeat of Zain Khan and plunder of Sirhind is also referred in 'News Reports from Delhi' in J.S.Grewal and Irfan Habib, *op.cit.*, p.195.

65. *Ibid.*, p.384.

66. *Ibid.*, p.385.

son, Jawahar Singh and the entire Jat nation determined to avenge themselves and took the help of Marathas and Sikhs.⁶⁷ However Bhangu makes no mention of the Sikh-Jat alliance against Najib-ud-doulah. He only states that the latter appealed to Abdali to come to his rescue⁶⁸ which became an important factor for the seventh invasion of Abdali.

Embarking upon his seventh invasion Abdali reached Lahore in Oct. 1764. The Sikh Sardars made a quiet escape. Marching onto Amritsar, Abdali was surprised to find only thirty Sikhs, in number, fearlessly guarding the *Harimandir Sahib* under the command of Gurbaksh Singh Nihang of Khem Karan in a readiness spirit of self-sacrifice. Bhangu gives a graphic description of how these thirty men fell fighting against the Afghans and become martyrs in the true spirit of Sikhism.⁶⁹

Otherwise, the account of the seventh invasion of Abdali is quite brief and precise in the *Panth Prakash*. In fact, Bhangu has missed out on some of the important battles fought between the Sikhs and Afghans during the invasion. He refers to only one which was fought near Batala with success for the Sikhs.⁷⁰ Further, Bhangu states that Maharaja Amar Singh of Patiala, grandson of Ala Singh was given the title of Raja by Abdali during this invasion which is incorrect. Actually it was given to Ala Singh in Feb.-March 1765 when he was also confirmed as governor of Sirhind.

Abdali's discomfiture and failure against the Sikhs is well depicted by Bhangu. To add to his depression, Abdali is made to realize metaphorically that the lambs (Sikhs) had become lions and sparrows had become eagles. As it was God who gave the Sikhs strength, neither Abdali's sons and grandsons could defeat the Sikhs.⁷¹ Troubled by these thoughts Abdali died in 1766 before reaching Kabul. However this statement of Bhangu is not correct, for Abdali died in 1772 from disease.

Bhangu fails to mention that after the departure of Abdali, the Sikhs celebrated *Baisakhi* at Amritsar in April 1765 and passed a *gurmata* to take possession of Lahore which they did on 16th April, 1765 and also issued coins to mark the occasion. He also fails to state at least two more unsuccessful efforts made by Abdali to recover Punjab.

Conclusively speaking, it may be said that in Rattan Singh Bhangu's *Panth Prakash*, it is explicit that the Sikh-Afghan confrontation coincides with a crucial phase in the history of the Sikhs. This was the period in which

67. Hari Ram Gupta, *op.cit.*, pp.220-21.

68. Rattan Singh Bhangu, *op.cit.*, p.387.

69. *Ibid.*, pp.390-94. The date given by Bhangu for this event as 1765 is not correct for it happened in Dec. 1764. However the account of this event is a valuable treatise on the concept of martyrdom in Sikhism. Qazi Nur Muhammed who has given us a contemporary account of this invasion in his *Jangnama* compiled in 1765 also states that "they (i.e. Sikhs) did not at all show any fear of being killed nor the dread of death. For ref. See J.S.Grewal and Irfan Habib (Edited), *op.cit.*, p.207.

70. *Ibid.*, p.401.

71. *Ibid.*, p.402.

the foundations of the future territorial and political power of the Sikhs in Punjab were laid. The purpose of Bhangu is not to give a detailed account of all the invasions but to discuss them in the context of the rising power of the Sikhs. Essentially his concerns with the past are related to the acquisition of political power by the Sikhs. The Sikhs' fight against the Afghans was for a sacred cause viz. for political emancipation and for establishing sovereignty. The power established by the Sikhs was as legitimate as that of the Mughals.

Though the purpose of the Sikh-Afghan struggle was political but the struggle itself, according to Bhangu was a *dharma yudh*. He thus emphasizes the importance of religious faith and feelings of the Khalsa, in motivating their political activities and giving them a sense of solidarity and cohesion. His purpose is also to show that the prophecy attributed to Guru Gobind Singh to make 'eagles from sparrows' is fulfilled and that, according to Bhangu, was one of the primary reasons for the failure of Ahmad Shah Abdali.

Of course, if we judge the *Panth Prakash* with the yardstick of modern historiography, we will not be fair to Rattan Singh Bhangu. But still he has his limitations which cannot be ignored. Historical causation was due not to free human action but to divine intervention. Men were thus mere puppets before the divine decree, which was the final determinant of action. His chronology, too, at times is defective. Some crucial events pertaining to Sikh history during this period have been ignored by him. His account therefore has to be substantiated by other evidence. In fact, we cannot call Bhangu, a researcher in the real sense of the word, because primarily he is a recorder of transmitted evidence (what he had heard from his father and other elders).

However, inspite of all his limitations, Bhangu furnishes valuable information, though episodic in character, on the Sikh-Afghan relations and the acquisition of territories by the Sikhs in mid-eighteenth century Punjab.

FOREIGN TRADE UNDER THE MUGHALS : A CRITICAL EVALUATION

*Mohammad Idris**

The Mughal age from 1526 to 1707 A.D. was a period of renaissance in India. While trade and industry flourished, fine arts like sculpture, music, painting reached perfection.¹ The Mughal conquest of Northern India brought radical changes in socio-cultural, political milieu. Technological advancement also influenced the economic life of the people of Hindustan. It replaced the multi-state system of the Sultans with a centralized political organization controlled by a powerful monarch. In the wake of conquests of central Asia and Persia large number of immigrants and many celebrities came to India, settled down in Delhi and other cities. Many foreigners including merchants contributed in the state administration and the economic set up of the Mughals.²

The nature of India's trade, inland and foreign has practically been same in the ancient and medieval ages. During the Medieval period the whole of Northern and Western India had commercial relations with West Asia and extending through it to the Mediterranean world, as also to central Asia, South East Asia and China both over-sea and over-land routes.³

Zahiruddin Mohammad Babur (1526-30), the founder of the Mughal Empire in India was well aware of the importance of communication and foreign trade particularly to ensure the regular flow of reinforcements from Kabul. Thus soon after the conquest, square towers⁴ were erected after every eighteen (18) miles while chowkis were established after every 36 miles in order to create an efficient communication system, which helped in the development of trade.⁵ Nasiruddin Mohammad Humayun (1530-1540 and 1555-1556) had insufficient opportunity to show his ability as an administrator. Between Babur's death and Humayun's re-entry into India, the Surs ruled from Delhi. Sher Shah (1540-1545), the founder of the dynasty and a uniquely far sighted ruler re-organized the country's entire

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1. Kulshreshtha, S.S., *Development of Trade and Industry under the Mughals*, Allahabad, 1964, p.1.
2. Shireen Moosvi, *Production, Consumption and Population in Akbar's Time*, New Delhi, 1993, p.99.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Babur, Zahiruddin Mohammad, *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, Eng. Trans. By H. Beveridge, London, 1921, p.629.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 629-30.

administrative system.⁶ He constructed the Grand Trunk Road from Attock to Delhi.⁷ Travel for men and merchandize became easier and safer during Akbar's reign.⁸ The construction of new roads, bridges and military posts which gave the Army greater mobility also stimulated the flow of trade with foreign countries.⁹ Nuruddin Salim Mohammad Jahangir (1605-1627 A.D.) ordered Zamindars to plant trees on the routes between Agra and Attock and between Agra and Bengal.¹⁰ *Zafarnama* gives an idea of the route followed by Timur, which ran from Multan to Delhi via Tulamba, Sahwal, Jahwal, Ajodhan, Tohana, Samana and Panipat.¹¹

In Shah Jahan's time the overland routes from Multan and Kashmir had lost their importance on account of disturbances on the frontier. The Indo-Persian wars regarding the occupation and retention of Qandhar had caused great disturbance to these trade routes which linked to them.¹² Towards the end of the seventeenth century, Aurangzeb's incessant wars in the Deccan, bankruptcy of the administration and exhaustion of the imperial treasury, caused disorder and resulted in the ruin of trade.¹³

All the transactions with foreign countries were generally done on exchange basis. The foreigners were paid the prices in the form of precious metals. Only four travellers—Peter Mundy, Tavernier, Fryer and Marshal pay sufficient attention in their accounts to the weights and measures prevalent during this period.¹⁴ The use of money and the coinage system of this period indicate a considerable use of metals of different kinds. The modern researches have pointed out that the Indian production of the two metals, gold and silver was on a very limited scale. The accessible layers in the goldmines of Karnataka appear to have been long exhausted. Only little quantities of gold could have come from the sands brought down by the Himalayn rivers, for silver, no important mine seems to have worked. As a result was almost entirely dependent upon imports for its gold and silver supply.¹⁵ According to Bernier, supplying itself with articles of foreign growth does not prevent Hindustan from absorbing a large portion of gold and silver of the world, admitted through a variety of channels, while there

6. Farooque Abul Khair Mohammad, *Roads and Communications in Mughal India*, Delhi, 1977, p.10.

7. *Ibid*, p.11.

8. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, Eng. Trans. By H.Blochman, Vol.I, Calcutta, 1868, p.157.

9. Farooque Abul Khair Mohammad, *op.cit.*, p.13.

10. Nurruddin Salim Mohammad Jahangir, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Eng. Trans. By H. Beveridge, London, 1909, p.100.

11. Rizvi, S.A.A., *Khalji Kalin Bharat*, Aligarh, 1955, p.242.

12. Bigham, T.C., *Transportation, Principles and Problems*, Calcutta, 1968, p.11.

13. *Ibid*, p.12.

14. Meera Nanda, *European Travel Accounts During the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb*, Kurukshetra, 1994, p.59.

15. Chaudhuri, Tapan Ray, Irfan Habib (ed.), *Cambridge Economic History of India*, London, 1982, p.189.

is scarcely any opening for its return.¹⁶ It seems that in the 11th century metals received by the royalties and nobilities through foreign trade were mostly utilized by them either to feed their luxuries or to mint coins.¹⁷

The institution of Banking is very old in India. But indigenous banking received a major jolt with the advent of the Muslims in India as they brought along with them their own theories based on the Islamic principles which considered the selling of one's goods or property on interest a great sin. The other notable reasons for further setbacks to the Indians were the wars and mutual hostilities among the Muslim rulers and nobles which hampered the growth of trade and commerce. As a consequence banking and money lending suffered considerably.¹⁸

The North-West India was considered self-sufficient in almost every respect. It has always enough for internal consumption and also for export. But every country cannot fulfil her needs by herself. So they had to make some trade treaties between themselves for the use of the upper classes. The chief articles of import were certain articles of luxury like skills, velvets and embroidered curtains together with other furnishing and decorations.¹⁹ Being mainly an agricultural country, India was certainly fairly rich in agricultural products. But that does not mean that it exported only raw materials. There is a long list of various commodities which find references in the items of import and export during the Mughal period. One can classify these items of trade into two main categories—luxury and non-luxury items. On the basis of the accounts left by medieval travellers and Persian chroniclers horses, furs, precious stones, silk and silk stuffs and slaves were among the chief luxury items of imports from central Asia and Persia. Among other goods were various types of clothes, fruits, plants and herbs, gold, silver, olive oil, rose water, glass etc.²⁰

In exchange India exported numerous articles which were in demand not only in central Asia and Persia, but also in other Asian and European countries. Among luxury goods, there were very few except some varieties of cloth, pearls, elephants, tusks and horns, peacocks etc. Non-luxury products included spices, aromatic roots, cotton, Indigo-cakes, iron-swords, musk, different types of woods, sugar candy and grains, fruits and dry-fruits, dye products etc.²¹ Gold, silver and precious metals played an important role in the various areas of life of the people. The main reason for the significance of the metals were their economic assets (There are references

16. Francios Bernier, *Travels in Mughal Empire*, Delhi, 1972, p.204.

17. Neera Darbari, *Northern India under Aurangzeb*, Meerut, 1982, pp.218-219.

18. Pramod Sangar, *Growth of English Trade under the Mughals*, Jalandhar, 1993, p.250.

19. Ashraf, K.M., *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan*, New Delhi, 1970, p.143.

20. *Ibid.*, p.114.

21. *Ibid.*, p.145.

of gold, silver and precious metals imported from Persia to India.²² Abul Fazl states in the *Ain-i-Akbari* that gold was still imported into Hindustan.²³ With the coming of Europeans in India, a new beverage called 'Chai' or Tea started being used in the reign of Aurangzeb.

There is a long list of the cities which were frequented by the merchants in house regions well-connected with each other through various routs and exchanging goods with different countries. We are concerned here only with some of the major cities of central Asia, the Persia. Among the central Asian towns again the study is confined only to the cities located in and around Transoxiana. Hence in this category of the towns viz. Balkh, Tirmiz, Kish, Samarkand and Bukhara has been made on the basis of the contemporary literature.²⁴ In addition the town of Kabul has been discussed since it was a link between India and Central Asia from earlier times.²⁵

During the Mughal period like other countries, India had neither metalled roads nor advanced means of transport. Its vast area and varied physical features, together with dangers inherent in long journeys led travellers to form groups of various types, of these, the caravan was the most used, while pilgrims formed smaller groups.²⁶ The caravan was both the oldest and the most popular method of travelling in large groups. It provided the safety and security and made an important contribution on social and commercial life.²⁷ Although Persian and Urdu sources make many references to the leaders of Caravans, contemporary historical and travellers accounts say little about them. The leader of the Caravan called *Mir*, *Salar* or *Bakshi* was a very important person and like the captain of a ship, he had ultimate control of everything while the caravan was on the road. Probably he was employed by the merchants forming the caravan and these merchants normally made important decisions after full consultation with them.²⁸ The Mughals were of the hazards of travel and ordered strong measures to maintain peace and security in the Empire. William Finch (1608-11) found many guards and police posts whose purpose was to prevent robbery, and attend to the welfare of travellers.²⁹ It is not simple to have an idea whether India had a favourable balance of trade in this period. However, on the basis of literature available to us one can not interpret the balance of trade in favour of foreign merchants. Though the charm for possessing foreign goods remained confined to the Emperors, chiefs and some rich people, the

22. Mustawfi Hamdullah, *Nuzhat-Al-Qulub*, Eng. Trans. By G.L.E. Strange, London, 1919, p.222.

23. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, p.138.

24. Bretschneider, E., *Medieval Researches*, London, 1887, p.67.

25. *Ibid.*, p.69.

26. Farooque Abul Khair Mohammad, *op.cit.*, p.57.

27. Manrique, *Travels of Manrique, 1629-43*, Vol.II, Eng. Trans. By Hosten, London, 1927, p.221.

28. *Ibid.*, p.340.

29. William Foster (ed.), *Early Travels in India*, Oxford, 1921, p.144.

common man was leading an ordinary life fulfilling his little requirements through the local resources only.³⁰

Throughout the Mughal period the volume of Indian export through the north-western land routes fluctuated according to amity or hostility between India and Persia on the question of the possession of Qandhar and sometimes on the relations between the Mughal government and Portuguese.

30. Moreland, W.H., *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, New Delhi, 1994.. p.58.

GOBINDGARH FORT: THE STRONGHOLD OF THE LAHORE KINGDOM

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One of the most striking and historic objects of the city of Amritsar is the Gobindgarh Fort. It is situated outside Lohgarh gate (also called Lahori Darwaza, as the name implied it opened on the road to Lahore, capital of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The foremost task which was undertaken by Ranjit Singh after establishing his power in Amritsar (the religious headquarters of the Sikh Panth) was the construction of Gobindgarh Fort in 1809.¹

The city of Amritsar was conquered by the Maharaja in 1805. The Gobindgarh Fort was not altogether, a new structure. In the late eighteenth century the Bhangi Chief, Sardar Gujjar Singh had built a fort on the present site of the Gobindgarh Fort.² Ranjit Singh got this fort repaired in 1803 and rebuilt it as the strongest fort in 1809 under the supervision of Imam-ud-din,

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1. One of Ranjit Singh's earliest campaigns in 1802, was to recapture the sacred city of Amritsar which was also the most important commercial city of the Punjab. The city of Amritsar was divided between nearly a dozen *misals* (Sikh confederacies) who owned different parts of the city. The city of Amritsar was the headquarter of the Khalsa and was jointly ruled by the Sikh *Sardars*. But the Bhangi Sardars had held the most powerful position. The Bhangi Sardar Gulab Singh had died in the battle of Bhasin three years earlier. Mai Sukhan, the widow of Bhangi Sardar had the support of the Ramgarhia Sardars. She occupied the fort of Gobindgarh (old site). Immediately after his coronation (1802), Maharaja Ranjit Singh had convinced the people of the Punjab that he has assumed rights of sovereignty not only over all the Sikhs but over all the people who lived within the geographical limits of the Punjab and all the territories should pay tribute to him and owe allegiance to Lahore Durbar. After the conquest of Multan, Ranjit Singh turned his eyes towards Amritsar.

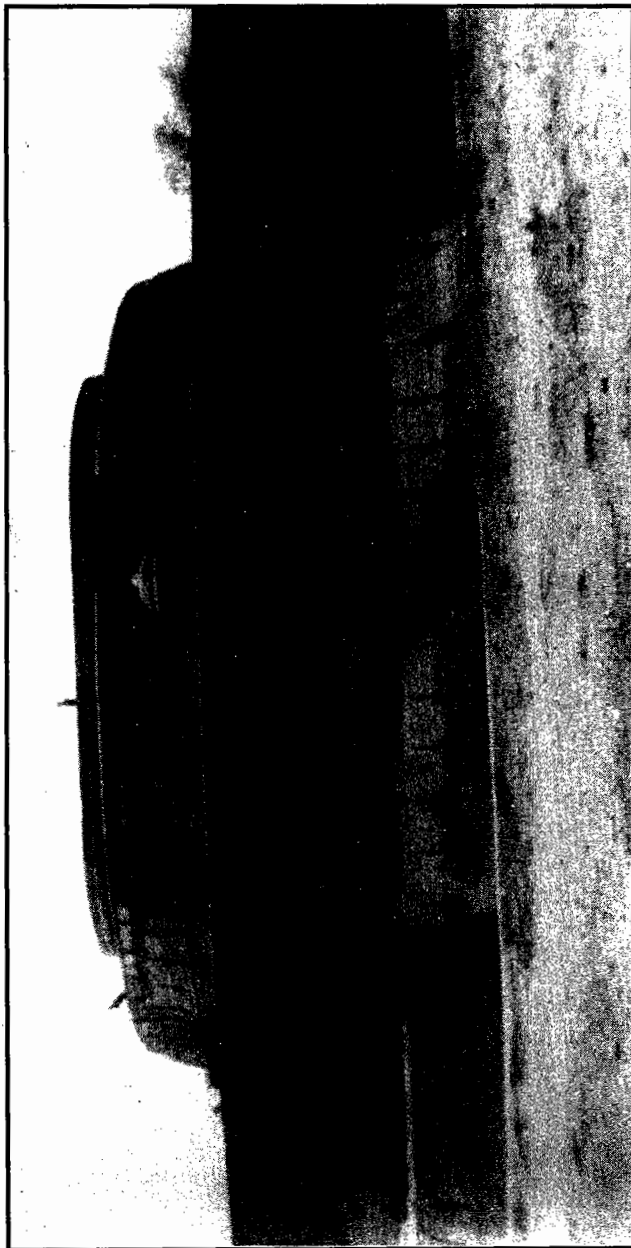
The city of Amritsar had the sanctity in the eyes of the Sikhs. Anyone who aspired to be the leader of the Khalsa and Maharaja of the Punjab had to take Amritsar to make good his title. See Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs, 1469-1839*, Vol.I, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1977, p.206.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh took the city, piecemeal, over-whelming the *Misal Sardars* one after another. Now, the Ramgarhias did not come to the help of the Bhangi widow and she surrendered the fort in lieu of a pension for herself and her son minor Desa Singh, Khushwant Singh, *ibid*.

The other parts and territories of the city of Amritsar were quickly overwhelmed by the Maharaja. See, *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms*, edited by Susan Strong, Published by V. and A. Publication, 1999, Inc. New York, p.121.

According to Dr. Bhagat Singh, the Gobindgarh Fort was built up by Maharaja Ranjit Singh between the years 1803-1809. See, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (Punjabi), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1983, p.168.

2. Gujjar Singh Bhangi was the son of the daughter of Gurbakash Singh Bhangi, one of the founders of the Bhangi Misal.



Interior View - Gobindgarh Fort, Amritsar

younger brother of Fakir Aziz-ud-din, the Foreign Minister of the Lahore Kingdom.³ The capture of Bhangi Fort was a valuable acquisition. With it Ranjit Singh acquired five big cannons including the massive *zamzama* which was also called Bhangian-ki-Top. It was captured by the Khalsa army from the Afghan invaders.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh named the fort after the name of the Tenth Master of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh Ji and it was formally added to his domains.⁴ The Fort is still called Gobindgarh Fort. The construction of the structure of Gobindgarh Fort was well planned. A large sum of money was spent to make the fort a solid foundation of the defensive line of the

3. There were three Fakir brothers serving the Maharaja, Fakir Syed Wahid-ud-din, a descendent of the famous Fakir family occupying high ministerial ranks at the Lahore *Durbar* informs us :

The third of the Fakir brothers, Imam-ud-din was not a figure about the Court, but he held important-administrative and military post upcountry. During a great portion of Ranjit Singh's reign he was custodian of the key fort of Gobindgarh at Amritsar and governor of the country immediately surrounding it. Along with these duties he also held the charge of the magazines, arsenals and royal stables there. He also saw military services in a number of campaigns, as for example, in operations against the forts of Sada Kaur and the Kanahaiyas.

Fakir Syed Wahid-ud-din, *The Real Ranjit Singh*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1981, p.32.

The names of the three Fakir brothers are - Fakir Aziz-ud-din, Fakir Nuruddin and Fakir Imamuddin. These Fakir brothers had close connection with Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Fakir Aziz-ud-din was the Foreign Minister, Fakir Nuruddin was the Home Minister. He was also royal physician. And Fakir Imamuddin held significant positions from time to time. All the three Fakir brothers held high offices under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The family traces its origin to a famous holy man, Syed Jalaluddin, a native of Arabia who converted the famous Hulaku Khan of Bokhara to Islam, married one of his daughters and travelled with her to Punjab, where he finally settled down. From Jalaluddin's residence in Bokhara the family acquired the name of 'Bokhari', but since Ranjit Singh's time that name has yielded place to the title of 'Fakir'. The title was first assumed by Ghulam Mohiuddin by popular acclaim because of his piety, but it was Azizuddin in whose case it first gained official recognition. This happened in a way typical of the relations between Ranjit Singh and his foreign minister. In the beginning Ranjit Singh used to address Aziz-ud-din as Shah Ji. One day, when the Maharaja was particularly pleased with Aziz-ud-din, he said to the latter, "Shah Ji, I wish to give you some title which will stick to your family from generations to generations. Can you suggest one?" Maharaj, replied Azizuddin, "If it is your pleasure to do so, then be gracious enough to grant me a title which will not sound too big if future generations of my family should become poor and which will have an added grace if they should remain rich or become richer still." "What about-Fakir?" asked the Maharaja. "Your father is already spoken of by that title". "There could be no better title than that for me and my family." Asserted Azizuddin. So the title was formally conferred along with a gift of two valuable shawls of orange brown (*gerwa*), the colour distinctive of ascetics.

Fakir Syed Wahid-ud-din, *The Real Ranjit Singh*, pp.25-26.

Fakir, is a word of Arabic derivation and is in common parlance used to denote a mendicant, but that is its corrupted meaning. In the language of mysticism and religion it has the opposite connotation, it means one who is content with what God gives him in the way of his material needs and strives only for spiritual riches (*Ibid*).

4. Barkat Rai Chopra (Ed.), *Amritsar District Gazetteer*, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1976, p.575.

Maharaja's Kingdom. 'The Maharaja believed that whosoever possessed the Gobindgarh Fort held keys of the Kingdom'.⁵ Gobindgarh Fort was built of bricks and lime with numerous bastions and strong gates.⁶ It had a treble line of defence and deep moat around the outer wall which was nearly 100 metres in perimeter and square in shape.⁷ Its height and heavy batteries placed one over the other, give it an imposing appearance.⁸ There were two main gates. These wooden gates were called *Darwaza-a-I-Ali* on the eastern and western sides, with five heavy guns (*top-I-Kalan*) fixed on each.⁹ The wall of the fort had bastions with guns fixed for the gunners to fire if required. The *dhab* (pools) which supply water to the moats surrounding the Gobindgarh Fort was called *Moti Jhil*. Mufti Ali-ud-din, the author of *Ibrat Nama* has given a detailed account of this fort. He records, it had eight towers (*Burj*). Around it there used to be ditches made of bricks. The eastern gate was main entrance and it had a huge wooden door on which fine carving had been made. The dome of the entrance gate was gilded. The architecture, planning and masonry work of the Gobindgarh Fort represent a fine specimen of the skill of the contemporary Punjab-craftsmanship and fortification.

The management of the Gobindgarh Fort has its own interesting history. Fakir Imam-ud-din who was associated with the construction of the Gobindgarh Fort was appointed Civil Governor, *Qiladar* of Gobindgarh for many years.¹⁰ He was followed by other trusted *Qiladar* and competent commanders of the Maharaja. Shamir Singh became its next *Qiladar* (commandant).¹¹ Twenty Five pieces of cannons were placed in the Gobindgarh Fort. Maharaja Ranjit Singh ordered the fort to be put into the best state of defence and its continued improvements have made it a very strong post, 'rising to a lofty height above the plains. It's massive structure

5. M'Gregor, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol.I, London, 1846, p.19. Reprinted by Languages Department, Punjab.

6. *Ibid*.

7. Baron, Charles Hugel, *Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab* (tr. and ed. Major T.B.Jervis), First Published in 1845, Reprinted by Languages Department Punjab, Patiala, p.390.

8. V.N.Datta, *Amritsar Past and Present*, The Municipal Committee, Amritsar, 1967, p.181.

9. See Jacquemont, *The Punjab Hundred Years Ago*, p.28; also Ali-ud-din, *Ibratnama*, Sikh History Research Library, Khalsa College, Amritsar, p.390; Anand, Gauba, *Amritsar: A Study in Urban History (1840-1947)*, A.B.S. Publications, Jalandhar, 1988, p.12.

10. V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.181.

11. Shamir, a Sidhu Jat of village Thethar, near Lahore, became minor commander in Ranjit Singh's army. Shamir Singh fought the battle of Rasulnagar (1778-79) under Sardar Mahan Singh Shukarchakia, father of Ranjit Singh and is reported to have built the fortress of Gobindgarh at Amritsar at Ranjit Singh's orders, and became its first *Qiladar*. He served in the expedition of Kasur (1807), and later in 1819, he was appointed the *Thanedar* of Nurpur. He held a jagir at Gujranwala and died in the year 1824.

-Bikramjit Hasrat, *Life and Times of Ranjit Singh*, V.V.Research Institute, Hoshiarpur, 1977, p.263.

presented a remarkable imposing aspect'.¹² Several houses were built on the bastions of the Gobindgarh Fort. Raja Dhyani Singh, Ranjit Singh's Prime Minister, had some of his guns placed on the walls of the fort.¹³ Jamadar Khushal Chand, Commander-in-Chief of the *Sher-e-Punjab* lived in a spacious *haveli* (mansion) called *Haveli Jamadaran*. Two tunnels connected the *Haveli* with the fort. One of the tunnels was used to go from *Haveli* to the Gobindgarh Fort and the other for the return passage. These were so wide that two horsemen could gallop there inside them.¹⁴

The Fort of Gobindgarh served multifarious functions. Its primary function was to provide protection and defence to the dominions of the Maharaja. It was the store-house of arms, armaments and arsenals and magazines. In this Fort weapons and various kinds of artillery items were manufactured. It was a centre of royal Stable and ammunition was made and stored here. It had also a big mint for minting of coins (*taksal*). Copper coins (*siqqua falus*) and silver rupee of Amritsar-coins of Maharaja Ranjit Singh were minted here with the inscription *Zarab Sri Amritsar/Ambarsar* (minted at Amritsar). Heavy cannons were placed in the fort. The supply of cannon bags (*Kisah Jungi*) and other arms supply and reinforcement to the campaigns led in the Punjab hills and the north-west frontiers were supplied from Gobindgarh Fort. In one of the *Parwanas*¹⁵ (Maharaja's orders) Sardar Tej Singh the Commander-in-Chief of Maharaja's army *Kampu-i-Mua'lla*, who became infamous after the first Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46) on account of his treacherous conduct against the Sikh Army and secret alliance with the British in order to make available the services of the workmen of the artillery to Jawahar Mal, the *darogha-i-mistrikhana*, for manufacturing and

12. Nahar Singh Grewal (Chief Editor), *Historical Survey of Amritsar*, Government Higher Secondary School, Amritsar, n.d. p.155.

13. V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.182.

14. Nahar Singh Grewal, *op.cit.*, p.113.

15. The *Parwana* referred here is from "Sita Ram Kohli's Collection". This Collection contains 462 *Parwanas*. All these royal orders bear the dates and place of issue and also the royal seal (*mohr*). These *Parwanas* were issued over a period of thirteen months (14 November 1833 to 18 December 1834). Lala Ram Ditta Mal, a *munshi* in Tej Singh's office used to keep record of all orders received from Maharaja Ranjit Singh in a register entitled *-Kitab-I-Naqi-I-Parwanajat-I-Ahwal-I-Kampu-I-Mu'alla*. This register was later acquired from his family by Rai Bahadur Wazir Chand Trikha. In the late 1920 the Rai Bahadur gifted this manuscript to Sita Ram Kohli, the famous Punjab Historian who had published *Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar Records* (1919 and 1927); *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Sunset of the Sikh Empire* (1967). Sita Ram Kohli named the above mentioned register of *Parwanas* as 'A Book of Military Parwanas' and he presented a paper on it in the Indian History Congress held at Lahore in 1940. Ten years later, he wrote another paper on the basis of this collection under the title 'A Note on the Diplomacy of Some Khalsa Darbar Parwanas', (The National Archives, Vol. IV, Number I, New Delhi, 1950, pp.2-6.

repair of guns in the Gobindgarh Fort foundary.¹⁶ In another official order of the Maharaja to Tej Singh: arrangement for the supply of provisions to the granary of the Fort of Gobindgarh has been mentioned. Specific instructions have been given for the collection, procurement of price of the grain, the period within which it was to be collected, arrangements for its transport and cost of cartage per *mani* at different rates from different places etc.¹⁷ The documents are evidence of the excellence of careful management of the Gobindgarh Fort. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was ever watchful of the growing power of the British in the Indian Sub-Continent and he never neglected the defence of his own expanding dominions. Early in his reign, he strengthened the fortification of Amritsar, and the Fort of Gobindgarh became one of the most important fortress in the Punjab of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's days. The experience of the military campaigns in the northwest was reviewed at Amritsar. The Maharaja held a *Durbar* in the Gobindgarh Fort and announced his decision on the organization of the army.¹⁸ It was the most powerful strategic fort of the Lahore kingdom.¹⁹

During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the troops lived in Gobindgarh Fort, but later during the British period, they moved outside into

16. Our text on the narration of the history of Gobindgarh Fort refers to *Parwana* No.172 which reads:

Jawahar Mal the Darogha of the *Mistrikhana* is being sent to you. You should place at his disposal all the blacksmiths, carpenters and other artisans of the military so that he may get the guns manufactured for the fort of Gobindgarh. You should keep an eye on the progress of this work so that it is completed expeditiously. Making use of Jawahar Mal's services, you should get replaced all the butts of muskets which are not in good condition.

Lahore, 15 Baisakh 1891 (25 April 1834). Quoted from *Civil and Military Affairs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Eds. J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1987, pp.133-134.

17. This *Parwana* No.164 reads following:

You should take over the *taalluqa* of Shahpur together with the villages of the Begam against 25,000 rupees a year. Grain from the *rabi* of 1891, like wheat, grain, barley and linseed, should be collected from the *taalluqa* of Shahpur to be sent to the granary in Fort Gobindgarh and entrusted to Faqir Imamuddin Ansari. For Cartage, 8 annas per *mani* will be paid. You should keep Saudagar Kursiwala in the *taalluqa* of Shahpur and pay him Rs.1-8-0 per day with effect from 1 Jeth till 1 Sawan 1891.

The *Jagir* of Desu Singh is to be resumed. Regarding the *Jagir* wells of Commandant Ratan Singh, you should submit a report on the amount of revenue collected during the year. Keep the wells under your control. One village worth 500 rupees a year should be assigned to Diwan Singh *alias* Diwan Khurd, in consultation with the *munshi* of Saudagar Kursiwala, you should remit the revenues to the royal treasury and submit the statement of accounts of your *munshi's* together with the statement of account prepared by the *Munshi* of Saudagar Kursiwala. Of Rs.1-8-0, pay one rupee to Saudagar Kursiwala and 8 annas to the *munshi*.

Lahore, 12 Baisakh 1891 (22 April 1834).

-Quoted from *Civil and Military Affairs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, Eds. J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga, p.132.

18. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs, 1469-1839*, Vol.I, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1977, p.209.
19. Harbans Singh (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, 'Ranjit Singh', Vol.III, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1997, p.481.

the cantonment area of the city of Amritsar.²⁰ The Maharaja used the Fort of Gobindgarh for his residence in Amritsar during his visits to the city before the Ram Bagh Palace (also called Summer Palace) was constructed.²¹ It is said that in 1818 after the plunder of Multan, the Maharaja was obliged to take refuge in Gobindgarh Fort from the violence of the Gurkha Battalion, who were roused to desperation by being kept out of their pay.²²

Gobindgarh Fort also served as State Treasury. Tradition tells us that Maharaja Ranjit Singh deposited his treasure worth 30 lakh rupees and precious jewels as well as gold and silver in the Gobindgarh Fort under a strong guard of 2,000 soldiers. Even the famous Koh-i-noor diamond was kept here for safety. It is also believed that Ranjit Singh built this fort at the suggestion of Jawant Rao Holkar (the Maratha chief) in order to protect his treasure which he formerly kept with the bankers at Amritsar.²³ The treasury of Ranjit Singh, his *toshakhana* was kept in Gobindgarh Fort under the charge of Misar Beli Ram. A British diplomat estimated the contents of Maharaja's *Toshakhana* at 100,000,000 rupees.²⁴ Steinbach regarded the Gobindgarh Fort as a most striking edifice which held the wealth of the government in Ranjit Singh's time.²⁵

Political prisoners and defaulters in Maharaja's service were sent here for detention. We find many such entries in Sohan Lal Suri's *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*.

The British in October 1808 took momentuous decision to extend British protection to the Sikh States south of the Sutlej and demanded from the Maharaja the immediate withdrawal of Lahore armies to the other side of

20. V.N.Datta, *Amritsar Past and Present*, p.113.

21. J.S.Grewal, *The City of Golden Temple*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, (Second edition), 1996, p.17.

22. Major Lawrance, *Adventures of an Officer in the Punjab*, Vol.I, Reprint Languages Department Punjab, pp. 41-48.

23. V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.182.

24. J.S.Grewal, *The City of Golden Temple*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, (Second edition), 1996, p.17; See also, *Souvenir Indian History Congress*, 46th Session, 1985, ed. J.S.Grewal, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, p.49.

According to Victor Jacquemont, Ranjit Singh kept his treasure valued at 800,00,00 rupees here and some of his heavy cannons were placed in the fort - Jacquemont, *Journal (Letters from India)*, London, 1835, p.28.

Jacquemont underestimates the Maharaja's treasure, which could be computed at double the suggested value. Few foreigners had the privilege of viewing the royal treasury and Crown Jewels. Henry Fane, who saw them, describes them as the finest in the world. These were deposited at Gobindgarh Fort and at the Moti Mandir in Lahore Fort, and were of immense value. The most remarkable and greatest sight, however, was the great diamond called the *Koh-i-noor* or Mountain of Light, valued at three millions and half Pound Sterling - Fane, H.E., *Five years in India, 1835-1839*, Vol.I, London, 1844, p.83. In November 1838, Lord Auckland also visited the Golden Temple and had a glimpse of the royal treasure in the vaults of the fortress of Gobindgarh estimated at £ 2,000,000 Sterling.

-Auckland, *Broughton Papers*, (British Museum), 2 January, 1839, fol.411 b.

25. Steinbach, Lt.Col, *The Punjab: Being a brief account of the Country of the Sikhs*, Smith and Elder, London, 1845, p.5; also V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.182.

the river Sutlej. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was required to relinquish all conquests made subsequent to the arrival of the British mission under the leadership of Metcalfe. To enforce this decision a detachment of British troops (2,986 men) under Lieutenant Colonel Ochterlony, the Garrison Commander of Allahabad was ordered to advance immediately and occupy the fort on the river Sutlej (Phillaur). At the same time, another force (5,740 men) under General St. Leger advanced to support him.²⁶ Maharaja was himself for fighting out the challenge of the British aggression. He recalled his most pugnacious general, Dewan Mohkam Chand from Kangra and posted him at Phillaur on the Sutlej, opposite to Ludhiana. Orders were sent to all the *sardars* to come up with their troops and nearly 100,000 men came from all quarters. The new fort of Gobindgarh at Amritsar was strengthened and stocked with ammunition and provisions against a long siege.²⁷ The tension between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the British continued for some months. Fakir Aziz-ud-din, the Foreign Minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh counselled patience and negotiation with the British. Meanwhile the Franco-Russian invasion on India bleaked out. Napoleon was busy with attack on Spain. The immediate necessity for a war with Ranjit Singh ceased to exist. Finally the Treaty of Amritsar was signed on April 25, 1809, which provided for perpetual friendship between the two powers recognizing Maharaja's sovereignty over territories north of the Sutlej and maintenance by the Maharaja of no more troops on the north bank of the Sutlej than were necessary for policing his estates on that bank and would never make any encroachment on the possession of cis-Sutlej States under British protection.

Distinguished visitors were received in the Gobindgarh Fort. No foreigner with the exception of specially favoured ones were allowed to enter the Fort. Only Baron Hugel, Sir Henry Fane, Lord Auckland and W.G. Osborne had the privilege to visit the fort.

Baron Charles Hugel's *Travels in Kashmir and the Punjab* containing a particular account of the Government and character of the Sikhs originally written in German and Published in 1845 records an expressive picture of Gobindgarh Fort. Hugel visited the fort in 1837. He writes in simplicity and originality of thought. His narration profess to give the spirit of the facts rather than to record specific inquiries. He records:

Gobindgarh is a strong post, as it is built in a plain, any other situation would have done quite as well for a fortress, but it owes the present one to Amritsar, the holy tank, and the pilgrims who flock to it, wanted a protection against the persecutions of the Mohammedans, and Ranjit Singh began the work in 1807. It was to have been built on the plan of Ramgarh (original name Ram Rauni) with the view of

26. Bikram Jit Hasrat, *Life and Times of Ranjit Singh*, p.83.

27. Wahid-ud-din, *The Real Ranjit Singh*, p.68.

flattering Jodh Singh, the grandson of Jai Singh, whose co-operation in the conquest of Kasur was required by Ranjit Singh. The protection of holy tank and of pilgrims, was a good pretext for erecting a strong place for himself. In 1809, he ordered it to be put into the best state of defence and continued improvements have made it now a very strong post, rising to a lofty height above the plain, it presents with its tiers of guns, one over the other, a remarkably imposing aspect. The Indians say that the Maharaja's treasure is kept here, and that it consists of 30 lakhs of rupees, or 300 millions of florins, but I suppose this to be an idle fable. I dare say that some treasure of importance is hoarded here, though persons very well informed on the subject have assured me that Ranjit Singh's revenue hardly covers his expenditure. It was in some respects a great error to build this fortress so close to Amritsar. There are no outworks and vast ruins of the origin of which I could not gain any satisfactory account, extend to the entrance gate. The very thing which would be an impediment to the settlement of merchants in Europe, has exactly the contrary effect in India. In Europe, a merchant would carefully avoid the vicinity of a fortress, which naturally attracts the foe; and in case of siege, as surely endangers the safety of his property, and the existence of his house. In India it is otherwise. Whatever the fate of the country is in the balance, the property of individuals is destroyed, for a change of rulers invariably brings about a similar change of owners. The object of most importance is to secure property against the bands of robbers who avoid the neighbourhood of a fortress like Gobindgarh. The stronger this point, the more difficult the Indians suppose it of access, and the greater the security it affords them in Amritsar, which is now the richest city in northern India.²⁸

Sir Henry Fane, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in India was received with gun salute at Gobindgarh Fort when he went to attend the marriage of Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, the grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in March, 1837 A.D.²⁹ It is said that on September 11, 1837 *vakils* of the Nepal Government saw the Gobindgarh Fort and were highly impressed by its ramparts, towers, strength of its walls, the ditch etc. and remarked that they had never seen such a fort in the neighbouring countries ruled and protected by the Rajas.

28. Charles Baron Hugel, *op.cit.*, pp. 390-91.

29. V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.36; Wahid-ud-Din, *op.cit.*, p. 191.

On December 12, 1838 the Governor General Lord Auckland visited the Gobindgarh Fort. The visit of this British dignitary has been graphically described by Sohan Lal Suri, the court historian and diarist of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in his voluminous book *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*. Sohan Lal writes:

As the sun rose the *sowars* brought the news about Lat Sahib (Governor General). The Sarkar (Maharaja Ranjit Singh) immediately proceeded to receive him, riding on elephant and accompanied by select troops well decorated and armed. The Sarkar joined the Governor General near the Katra Khazana Gate. Then they proceeded towards fort Gobindgarh and a salute was fired a second time. The *Sarkar* showed the fort and ditch. The Governor General felt very much pleased on seeing it and remarked that it had been constructed quite strong and safe.

Gobindgarh Fort was again visited by British Governor General in 1839. On January 19, 1839 Lord Auckland, the Governor General visited Golden Temple and, had also a glimpse of the royal treasure kept in the Gobindgarh Fort.³⁰

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was ever vigilant for the consolidation of Gobindgarh Fort. After the departure of Charles Metcalfe, the Maharaja directed his attention to strengthening it and large sums of money have been expended in improving its structure.³¹

Before the time of the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Maharaja was extremely worried about the future state of affairs and the defence of his kingdom. On June 22, 1839, the Maharaja issued orders to one of his European Commander to go to guard the Gobindgarh Fort with precautionary instructions. On this aspect Wahid-ud-din writes:

The Sarkar issued an order to John Holmes asking him to march at midnight and go to Amritsar along with his platoons, 250 horse-men and some cannon and to establish himself firmly at the gates of the Fort of Gobindgarh and not to show any kind of confidence in any of his own (Maharaja's) relatives and the like.³²

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died on June 27, 1839. In 1849 the Cantonment was established by the British at Amritsar soon after the annexation of the Punjab. A road was melted from the Cantt. to the Gobindgarh Fort and it was called M's Leod Road more popularly known as Qila Road. This road separated Cantonment from Civil lines. Although, the Gobindgarh Fort was considered the strongest fort of Maharaja Ranjit Singh,

30. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh* (Eng. tr. V.S. Suri), S. Chand and Co. Delhi, 1961, Daftar III, p.588.

31. Steinbach, *op.cit.*, p.5; V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*

32. Wahid-ud-din, *op.cit.*, p.199.

some European travellers who visited Amritsar has pointed out the weak dimension of its structure. James Coley who saw the Fort gives his impressions that the serious fault from which the fort suffered was that its inside was visible from outside.³³

According to Jacquemont; 'As a fort it was poorly designed and clumsily constructed. Its defensive works were also poor and ill-designed.'³⁴

The history of Gobindgarh Fort after the annexation of the Punjab by the British is full of significant events. During the Indian Revolt (*Krantī* or *gaddar*) of 1857 against the British rule, Gobindgarh Fort was the military stronghold of the British at Amritsar, though it was not impregnable like Gwalior Fortress, nor it was equipped with arsenal like the Fortress at Phillaur. The revolt of 1857 is considered as the First Indian War of Independence against the British.³⁵ However, the British expected trouble from the Indian side, primarily because they knew the psyche of the Sikhs and were aware of the fact, that, the Gobindgarh Fort was invested in the minds of the Sikhs with the holiest associations, as it was named after their Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh, the creator of Khalsa and the last Guru of the Sikhs.³⁶ In the psycho-religious perspective, the Gobindgarh Fort has essentially a national character for the Sikh *Panth*. Realising the seriousness of the situation at Amritsar in 1857, J.W.Kaye (1814-1876) the authoritarian historian of the Indian Revolt of 1857, recorded:

In no place, throughout the Punjab, was the influence of the priest-hood so powerful and in no place had the spirit of nationality so largely survived the subjection of the people.

There the Sikh inhabitants were more likely to rise than in any other part of the country and to that centre more than in any other point-were the Sikhs likely to turn in their eyes for a given signal of insurrection.³⁷

Some insight into the importance of British vigilance at Amritsar over the apprehension is gleaned from Sir John Lawrence's correspondence. In his letter to Herbert Edwards, dated 9th June, 1857, John Lawrence compared Amritsar with Peshawar, Multan and Lahore and suggested that it was necessary to hold Amritsar if the Punjab was to remain in the hands of the British. Montgomery hinted that there was rumour that the disarmed sepoy from Lahore Cantt., Mian Mir area were coming in a body to help the

33. James Coley, *Journal of Sutlej Campaign of 1845-1846*; and also Lord Harding's *Tours*, London, 1856, p.104, as quoted by V.N.Datta in his *Amritsar Past and Present*, p.182.

34. Victor Jacquemont, *Journal*, p.28.

35. See Karl Marx's book on this subject, *The First Indian War of Independence 1857-1859*.

36. Rev.Cave Browne, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.I, p.102, as referred by V.N. Datta, *op.cit.*, p.42.

37. John William Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War in India, 1857-1858*, London, 1896, Vol.II, pp.435-436. See V.N.Datta, *op.cit.* p.43.

regiments at Amritsar to occupy Gobindgarh Fort.³⁸ At this information Mr. Fredric Cooper, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, was advised by his superiors to defend the Fort himself if any such eventuality arose.

After the annexation of the Punjab and take over of the control of Gobindgarh Fort by the British, the arrangement of the management of the Fort was like this; this stronghold at Amritsar was garrisoned mainly by sepoy troops—a detachment of the 59th Native Infantry with only 70 European artillerymen, and in view of the insufficient European force, the British authorities took immediate steps to reinforce the existing European troops at Amritsar stationed at Gobindgarh Fort.³⁹ It was reported that on 5th July, Nicholson reached Amritsar, it was feared that the dis-armed troops at Lahore had revolted, and were marching towards Amritsar. On July 9, a mile away from the cantonment the sepoys of the 59th Regiment who only a few days earlier had been praised for their loyalty were ordered to lay down their arms and they surrendered themselves to this indignity without any protest.⁴⁰ Nicholson justified this happening by reporting that he had disarmed this regiment as a precautionary measure. And, therefore, the fort of Gobindgarh became a 'trusty bulwark' of British power which it had not been hitherto.⁴¹ Sir Richard Temple, while reviewing the whole episode at Amritsar, noted that a few commanders save Nicholson could have taken such strong steps.⁴² By this time the British had consolidated their control over the Punjab. The common masses remained pacific and co-operative with the British Government even during the critical days of the Mutiny of 1857 when the fort of Gobindgarh had actually become bulwark of British power.⁴³

When Amritsar Municipal Committee was formed in April 1868 under Act 1867 by the Punjab Government Notification No. 950 of the 6th April 1858, the Officer Commanding Fort Gobindgarh was also nominated as its member by Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab.⁴⁴

W.C.Caine, a British tourist to India who spent four winters in India during the reign of Queen Victoria and made extensive tours in the famous cities of India, also visited Amritsar. He records his impressions about the Fort of Gobindgarh as following:

The fort of Gobindgarh was built by Ranjit Singh to dominate the town, and inspire the turbulent pilgrims who came to the sacred shrine (Sri Hari Mandir Sahib/the Golden Temple) with some sense of the presence of authority. It is a

38. *Ibid.*, p.435.

39. Rev.Cave Browne, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. I, London, p.102; See V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.42.

40. John William Kaye, *op.cit.*, p.636.

41. *Gazetteer of the Amritsar District (1883-84)*, p.12.

42. V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.44.

43. See Sir George Temple, *The Legends of the Punjab*, 3 Vols., Bombay Education Society.

44. See V.N.Datta, *op.cit.*, p.48.

place of great interest, being merely a modern Indian Fort of the present century. It is at present occupied by a small number of British troops.⁴⁵

It seems Mr. W.C.Caine was not well acquainted with the history and strategic importance of Gobindgarh Fort. The Gobindgarh Fort had played a great role in the defensive arrangement and military organization during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The Gobindgarh Fort is also associated with events of significant consequences during the struggle for National Freedom of India. During the 1919 disturbances following the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, the Principal of Khalsa College Amritsar, Mr. G.A. Wathen was taken to Gobindgarh Fort under the orders of the Local Military Commander for safety. He stayed there only for one day. During the Partition of India in August 1947 in the wake of migration of Hindu-Sikh population from Pakistan to India, streams of refugees from Pakistan poured into Amritsar. The Refugee Camp was installed in the campus of Khalsa College. In January 1948 many of these refugees were moved to the Gobindgarh Fort Camp. The Fort served as a centre of relief work and safety for the refugees.

During the Post-Independence period, the Gobindgarh Fort played a significant role in the defence affairs of India. During Indo-Pak Wars (1965 and 1971) the Gobindgarh Fort held an important strategic place.

During the recent period of terrorism, militancy and Punjab crisis, and the conduct of Blue Star Operation and Military attack on the Golden Temple in 1984, Gobindgarh Fort served as the headquarters of the Military deputed in the Punjab. Governor's rule was imposed in the Punjab by the then Indian Government and the Fort of Gobindgarh remained the central place of Indian military activities. After the establishment of elected democratic State Government in Punjab in 1986, Governor's rule came to an end. Peace and normalacy was restored in the Punjab after a decade of crisis.

At present the Gobindgarh Fort houses a garrison of the Indian Army. Even now, this fort is under the control of Indian Defence Force. It is considered as a monument of great historical importance by the tourists and visitors to the holy city of Amritsar. The story of the Gobindgarh Fort has a special interest to the students and researchers of Punjab history.

The Gobindgarh Fort, presently is in a state of neglect and requires adequate repair. Recently, the Amritsar Vikas Manch has demanded from the Central Government to take steps for the maintenance of this historic Fort associated with Maharaja Ranjit Singh and has also requested the Government to throw open Gobindgarh Fort to public and tourists. But since this Fort is occupied by the Indian Army, it is not an easy job to make it a tourist site for reasons of defence and security of the Army centre housed here.

45. W.C.Caine, *Picturesque India*, Pub. In London and New York, George Routledge and Sons Limited, 1898, p.156.

LAHORE DURBAR AND JAMMU: A STUDY IN RELATIONSHIP DURING 1799-1822

*Shailendra Singh Jamwal**

The kingdom of Jammu situated between the plains of the Punjab and the lower Himalayan region was an ancient principality. Its rulers had some times assisted the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughal Emperors to deal with the rebellious people between the rivers Chenab and Jhelum. They also intervened in the political affairs of the provincial kingdoms of Chamba and Kangra in the medieval ages. However, until the close of the eighteenth century Raja Ranjit Deo (1740-1781), was the mightiest ruler ever produced by the kingdom of Jammu. It was the time when the disintegration of the Mughal Empire and the repeated invasions of Ahmed Shah Abdali had broken up the Punjab into shreds. All the twelve Sikh *Misls* had carved out for themselves small principalities at different places and towards the last quarter of the eighteenth century, they increased the frequency of their plundering-raids on Jammu. It is on the record that different Sikh *Misls* were raiding Jammu to plunder and some of the *Misls* had emerged so powerful that they started intervening in the internal politics of the Jammu kingdom. Therefore, the Dogras of Jammu regarded these *Misls* as rapacious bandits. Naturally, they had a strained relationship with these *Misls*. The *Misls*, who intervened in the internal political affairs of the Jammu kingdom and raided it, were the *Bhangis*, the *Sukerchakias* and the *Kanhayas*. In 1785, Mahan Singh, the chief of the *Sukerchakia* Misl and father of Ranjit Singh (later Maharaja Ranjit Singh) ordered his troops to plunder Jammu. Accordingly, the raiders under the command of Mahan Singh plundered the town to their satisfaction and finally it was set ablaze.¹ Many men and women were taken as prisoners.² Khushwant Singh records in his account³: 'With the loot of Jammu Mahan Singh raised the Sukerchakias from a position of comparative obscurity to that of being one of the leaders of the Misl confederacy.'

Thus, with the resources of Jammu, Mahan Singh consolidated his position and influence in the Punjab. He died in 1792, and Ranjit Singh became the chief of the *Sukerchakia* misl. On July 16, 1799, Ranjit Singh conquered the city of Lahore from the Bhangis, following chaos and confusion after fourth invasion of Zaman Shah on Lahore, and proclaimed

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1. Shahmat Ali, *The Sikhs and Afghans*, (reprint 1970), p.86.

2. Ali-ud-Din, *Ibratnama*, p.86.

3. Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh*, 1962, p.22.

himself the Maharaja. By this time Jammu had attained the prosperity and glory in the whole of this region while Amritsar was relatively shabby. Consequently, Maharaja Ranjit Singh immediately after the occupation of Lahore turned his intention towards the conquest of Jammu. In the year 1800, Maharaja Ranjit Singh marched from Lahore to annex Jammu from Raja Ajit Singh, whose court had become the hub of the intrigues, which rendered the kingdom weak. On his way to Jammu, he conquered Mirowal, Jassarwal and Narowal, reached within couples of miles of the town of Jammu, and encamped there to take rest and preview of the geo-political situations. At this critical juncture, Jammu Durbar required the unity amongst the entire different social and political groups to put a joint front against the invader. However, the Jammu Court was divided into two factions led by Mian Mota Singh, one of the most experienced courtiers who had earlier acted as *Madarul Muham*⁴ and the headstrong chief queen of Raja Ajit Singh, popularly known as Rani Bandral. Consequently, realizing the futility of the resistance to the advancing troops of the Lahore Durbar, Ajit Singh preferred to submit and acknowledge the suzerainty of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Therefore, Raja Ajit Singh along with his uncle and Minister Mian Mota Singh went to meet Maharaja Ranjit Singh to acknowledge his overlordship and thereby offered him a *nazrana* of rupees twenty thousand and an elephant. Maharaja Ranjit Singh accepted the offer and in turn bestowed upon Raja Ajit Singh a robe of honour and confirmed him as the ruler of the Jammu kingdom.⁵

Now, temporarily the threat from Lahore was over. However, the courtiers at the Jammu Durbar were so shortsighted, neither had they learnt any lesson from this invasion nor could they sink their differences. The Jammu Durbar continued remains divided into two hostile camps. Both the rival factions dissipated their limited resources in undermining each other and never thought of conserving their energies to preserve the sovereignty and integrity of the kingdom. Raja Ajit Singh, the ruler of Jammu, lost the will and the initiative to set things right. Rani Bandral, the wife of Raja Ajit Singh, was an extremely ambitious and intriguing woman. She started wielding real power, and Raja Ajit Singh was reduced to a rubber-stamp ruler. Rani Bandral, too, instead of forging a unity, further weakened the kingdom by antagonising Mian Mota Singh, who exiled from the Jammu Durbar to live at Purmandal, twenty miles away from Jammu. After the attack of the Lahore Durbar on Jammu and especially after his expulsion from Jammu Durbar, Mian Mota Singh began sending dispatches to the Lahore Durbar concerning the hilly areas and Maharaja Ranjit Singh attached great value to his views and suggestions.

4. Jean Phillipe Vogel, *Catalogue of the Bhuri Singh Museum Chamba*, Calcutta (1909), p.72, C-46.

5. S.M.Latif, *History of the Punjab*, (1964), p.352.

By this time, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had consolidated his position in the Punjab by unifying all the Sikh *Misls* and conquering the entire territory* between the rivers Sutlej and Ravi. In 1806, the Maharaja on the advice of the *Gurmata* signed a 'treaty of friendship' with the English. In the same year, he abolished the *Gurmata*, and assumed its power. By the year 1808, the imperialist policy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh had taken a definite and concrete shape and Jammu was within the ambit of his plan of expansion. Therefore, taking advantage of the internal weaknesses of the Jammu Durbar, in February 1808, Maharaja Ranjit Singh ordered his troops to march from Amritsar to conquer Jammu. The Sikh forces on their way, captured Pathankot, Jasrota, Chamba and Basohli and finally attacked Sialkot, a border town between the Jammu and Lahore, while at Kaluwal Maharaja Ranjit Singh was encamping and commanding the reserve within a distance of twenty miles south of Jammu. After the arrival of the Lahore troops at Kaluwal, the Maharaja deputed one of his trusted commanders *Bhai Hukma Singh* alias *Chimni* to accomplish the task of the conquest of Jammu, while he himself returned to Lahore.⁶ However, it is not certain whether Maharaja Ranjit Singh had authorized *Bhai Hukma Singh* to launch an attack on Jammu or it was the latter's personal decision. There are reasons to suspect that he might have conducted this campaign without the consent of the Maharaja, because *Hukma Singh* himself was already holding a *jagir* near Sialkot, in the neighbourhood of Jammu, and might have set his heart upon adding more to it.⁷ Consequently, *Bhai Hukma Singh*, at the head of a well-equipped force, marched towards Jammu. The Sikh forces reached the southern flank of Jammu and encamped on the left bank of the river Tawi, opposite the Gumat Gate.

Thus, the terror of the Sikh invasion forced the rival factions in Jammu Durbar to sink their differences and to resist the attack under a unified command. Rani Bandral and her husband, along with the elders of the Rajput brethren, now persuaded Mian Mota Singh who had been earlier exiled from Jammu Durbar to command the Dogra force in the battlefield. At first Mian Mota Singh refused. However, later he assented and led the forces to the Gumat-Gate and the Mahesh pass, a place near about two kilometers east of the Gumat-Gate on the right bank of the river Tawi, with a view to defend both the openings of the town of Jammu on the southern side and intercepted the advancing Lahore troops. Both sides perpetrated bloodshed for a few hours. However, the Dogra soldiers could not bear for long the large and well equipped force of the Lahore Durbar, therefore

* By the beginning of the year 1808, places like Akalgarh, Kasur, Kangra, Pindi, Bhatian, Dhanni, Chinot-Daska, Sialkot, Phagwara, Jhang, Karlan, Kathua, Amritsar, Gujrat and Sheikhpora had either been conquered and annexed or made tributary.

6. Kirpa Ram, *Gulabnama*, (Persian), p.99.

7. Richmond's Memorandum, f.12, Patiala Archive.

withdrew and confined themselves within the walls of Jammu to resort to the tactics of 'the Sally army'. The Sikh forces had an upper hand from the beginning.⁸ However, at the time of dire need, two unknown Dogra warriors suddenly appeared on the battlefield. They were Mian Dedo, the son of Mian Hazara Singh popularly known as Mian Hazari a *jagirdar* of village Jugti. While the other, Gulab Singh, the son of another *jagirdar* of Anderwah, who was just fifteen years old, both fell upon the enemies like the lions, displayed unbridled enthusiasm, courage and fighting skill. As a result, finally the Sikh forces were defeated and retreated to Sialkot.⁹

However, the Jammu Durbar did not hope to withstand the latter's onslaught for long. So, they preferred to bend than to break. Consequently, after a couple of days Jammu Durbar sent Mian Mota Singh, the shrewdest in the kingdom to Lahore to meet Misser Dewan Chand, a close confidant of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to sue for peace between Jammu and the Lahore Durbar.¹⁰ Mian Mota Singh was successful in neutralizing the aggressive posture of the celebrated commanders of the Lahore Durbar towards Jammu. It was resolved that Raja Ajit Singh would attend the Lahore Durbar to conclude the terms of the Peace Treaty. Initially, he was hesitant to visit the Lahore Durbar, as there were reports of a backlash in the aftermath of the Dogra-Sikh war. However, the Lahore Durbar guaranteed him full security and he along with his uncle, Mian Mota Singh went to Lahore. The Jammu Durbar was eager to conclude peace, while the Lahore Durbar also intended to ensure its over-lordship and a regular tribute along with a present of the *Pahari* slave girls from Jammu. Therefore, when Raja Ajit Singh and Mian Mota Singh were presented before Maharaja Ranjit Singh, peace was established. The Jammu Durbar promised to pay the Lahore Durbar an annual tribute of rupees seventy-three thousands and *Pahari* slave girls, while in turn the Maharaja guaranteed peace in Jammu.¹¹

However, the majority of Jammu was against the conclusion of this agreement. The ruler to save the people, in general, and his throne, in particular, had concluded this agreement. The public had not been into confidence concerning this peace agreement. So, this agreement was a shock to the self-respecting Rajputs who always preferred self respect to death*. Therefore, immediately after the conclusion of the treaty, majority of the Rajputs of Jammu resented it and regarded this agreement as a mere tame

8. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, pp.100-01.

9. Sohan Lal, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Vol.II, p.68; Also see N.D. Nargis, *Gulab Singh*, (1965), p.19.

10. Ibid.

11. Sita Ram Kohli, *Ranjit Singh*, (1933), pp.152-53; Also see S.M.Latif, *op.cit.*, p.383.

* Rajputs of Jammu believe that they belong to the Solar Dynasty of Raja Raghu and exactly in the line of the most brave Raja Dashrath and Raja Ram Chandra, who always preferred self-respect to death, they were committed to their words and duties. There are so many popular sayings among them even up to day, e.g. , *Raghu-kul reet sada chali aaye, pran jaye par bachan na jaye* and *jaan jaye par aan na jaye.*, etc.

surrender to the Lahore Durbar. While the "Young-Turks" among the Rajputs could not digest the Lahore Durbar's humiliating and irrational demands for the supply of *Pahari* (hill) girls, and were ready to measure their swords even with the combined authorities of the Jammu and the Lahore Durbars. The demand was insulting to their sentiments. They were ready to sacrifice their lives to save the dignity and honour of the entire Dogra community. Mian Dedo, a *jagirdar* of a small village Jagti was the most prominent among them. Some other like-minded Rajput youths of Jammu such as Mian Dharam Singh Raipuria, Mian Chaffu, Mian Chain Singh Hansaliwala, Jawahar Singh Agoria and some *Zamindars* and *Marzbans of Talluqas*, in the periphery of Jammu, like Jura Langeh and Puro Drorah also joined him to defy the Lahore Durbar.¹² They resorted to guerrilla-tactics.

In the meantime, Maharaja Ranjit Singh summoned Gulab Singh to Lahore through Mian Mota Singh.¹³ The Maharaja had already heard from Hukma Singh in glowing terms the deeds of valour, which Gulab Singh had displayed during the defence of Jammu. Maharaja Ranjit Singh further wrote that Hukma Singh had invaded Jammu without seeking his permission.¹⁴ Accordingly, in October 1810, Mian Mota Singh and Gulab Singh appeared before the Maharaja at Daska, a few kilometers away from Sialkot, where the Maharaja was encamped for a few days. The Maharaja was impressed with the personality of Gulab Singh and immediately recruited him as a *Ghorchara** (cavalryman) in his army.¹⁵ By this time, Mian Mota Singh had become one of the favourites in the Lahore Durbar.

However, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was not satisfied with the existing arrangement of Jammu as a tributary state. By this time, he had finalized the ambitious plan of the conquest of Kashmir. However, Jammu lies between Lahore and Kashmir, held the key to success. Now, for the successful execution of his plan, the situation required that all the territories in the south of the *Pir-Panjal* region (lower Himalaya) should be completely subdued and placed in trusted and safe hands. This plan was materialized when in 1811-12, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's chief queen and their elder son,

12. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, pp.150-51.

13. G.C.Smyth, *A History of the Reigning Family of Lahore*, (1874), p.249.

14. Richmond's Memorandum, f.13.

* The *Ghorcharas* constituted the standing cavalry force of the Maharaja. They were classified as the *Ghorcharas Khas* and the *misaldars*, while the formers were exclusively recruited from the noble families of the Punjab, the latter term referred to those small chiefs, who, after being subjugated took up the service of the Maharaja, along with their followers. The salary of a trooper, in the beginning ranged between rupees three and four hundred per annum; later it was reduced and ranged between rupees two hundred fifty and three hundred. Out of this salary, he was to provide himself and his horse. Of course it was small, but still many men liked to be recruited in this section of the army because of the dignity attached to it and for the love of fighting.

15. Sita Ram Kohli, *Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar Records*, Vol.I, (1919), pp.103-07.

Prince Kharrak Singh were going on a pilgrimage to the *Jawala-Mata*, at Kangra. *Bhai* Ram Singh, one of the most trusted commanders of the Lahore Durbar escorted them at the head of two thousand and six hundred troops. While they were returning from the pilgrimage, Rani Bandral persuaded her husband, Raja Ajit Singh to pay a respect as a courtesy to the Royal pilgrims near Purmandal. Rani Bandral, who considered Prince Kharrak Singh as one of her well-wishers, secretly sent a message to the young Prince through Mian Mota Singh, who was accompanying her husband, suggesting that he could conquer the kingdom of Jammu easily if he diverts his troops towards Jammu.¹⁶ If it happens, Raja Ajit Singh would have no other option than to submit most humbly.¹⁷ The Prince and *Bhai* Ram Singh were pleased over this significant information and invitation. Accordingly, Prince Kharrak Singh led his troops towards Jammu from the north-eastern side of the town via *Chah-I-Tutan* and Nagrota and in haste he entered Jammu from Dhaunthali, a place that had rocks and hills in the north-eastern direction of Jammu on the right bank of the river Tawi. Raja Ajit Singh fled towards the hills of Katra town and his followers submitted without fighting. The entire matter was reported to Maharaja Ranjit Singh at Lahore to seek his direction on the further course of action. In response, the Maharaja conferred the *jagir* of Jammu on Prince Kharrak Singh, and ordered to pension off Raja Ajit Singh and to consult Mian Mota Singh in running the day-to-day administration of Jammu. In lieu of his service Mian Mota Singh should be given a *jagir*, amounting to annual revenue of rupees twelve thousand. Kharrak Singh remained in Jammu for some time, and then, appointed Dewan Ajit Singh Khullal of Gujrat as its governor to rule on his behalf in consultation with Mian Mota Singh. Then he returned to Lahore. Thus, the Lahore Durbar annexed the kingdom of Jammu and added it to the *Suba* of Lahore. However, this arrangement displeased the former queen of Jammu, Rani Bandral, because her arch rival Mian Mota Singh had been assigned an important position in the new dispensation. Hence, Jammu and its people had to pay the price for their mutual jealousies and internal weaknesses, by losing their sovereignty and independence. This further provoked Mian Dedo and his followers to oppose this occupation. In the meantime, by 1812, Mian Kishore Singh and Mian Dhian Singh, father and younger brother of Gulab Singh respectively were employed in the Lahore Durbar. Later, Suchet Singh, the youngest brother of Gulab Singh also got employment in the Lahore Durbar. Thus, the entire Dogra family of Jammu was committed to serve Maharaja Ranjit Singh until the end of their lives.

Thus, the occupation of Jammu by the Lahore Durbar had very serious repercussions on the internal politics of Jammu that had far-reaching consequences. It led to the division of the entire ruling Rajput fraternity of

16. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, p.108.

17. *Ibid.*, p.109.

Jammu region into two hostile camps. Since, both these groups had difference of approach and divided into two hostile camps, so a bloody clash was inevitable. Mian Dedo emerged as the most popular but a violent peasant leader of one of the factions that dominated the political scene of Jammu for a decade. While on the other hand, Gulab Singh was leading the other faction that was supporting the cause of the Lahore Durbar and was committed to serve it. So, the relationship of Jammu with the Lahore Durbar ought to be studied from two different angles in which their political consideration had jeopardized their social relationship and commitments.

Gulab Singh's family played a sheet anchor's role in almost all the campaigns of the Lahore Durbar in the second decade of the nineteenth century. First, in 1813 Gulab Singh and his father Mian Kishore Singh were associated with an unsuccessful campaign in Kashmir in which Kishore Singh was injured. While retreating from Kashmir the tribal besieged them. However, Gulab Singh displayed extra-ordinary efficiency and courage and saved the lives of around two hundred soldiers of the Lahore Durbar at Sahrah and Rah Kotli Hangralan near Poonch for which he was duly rewarded with the grant of three *jagirs* of Beyol, Kharoti, Bhandian and the command of twenty-two horses.¹⁸ In 1815, Gulab Singh was asked to suppress a revolt against the Lahore Durbar in Doab region; Gulab Singh rendered valuable services by capturing the fort of Garh-Darmala in this region near Jullundur. This time Maharaja Ranjit Singh conferred on Gulab Singh two other *jagirs* of Lala-Chobara in the district of Sialkot and Ramgarh in Samba.¹⁹ In the same year, Gulab Singh volunteered himself to fight against his own relatives in Reasi, when they rebelled against the Lahore Durbar. Gulab Singh faced very tough resistance from the inhabitants of Reasi. However, at last he was successful in suppressing the revolt. The news of the Gulab Singh's success pleased Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who bestowed on him the *pargana* of Reasi, the erstwhile *jagir* of his predecessors.²⁰ In 1818, during the siege of the Multan fort, Gulab Singh volunteered himself to rescue a Sikh commander, who had fallen at the foot of the wall of the fort, despite incessant enemyfire, and brought him back to safety. Maharaja Ranjit Singh appreciated and lauded this brave act in his Durbar.²¹ In the same year, the Maharaja appointed Dhyan Singh, the younger brother of Gulab Singh, as a *Deodhi-Officer* and admitted Suchet Singh, the youngest brother of Gulab Singh, as a courtier in his Durbar. He was also authorized to listen to petitions and disposes them off. In this way, the entire family of Mian Kishore Singh was honoured in the service of the Lahore Durbar. In July 1819, Gulab Singh took leading part in the conquest

18. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, p.116.

19. *Ibid.*, p.120.

20. *Ibid.*, p.122.

21. Bawa Satinder Singh, *The Jammu Fox*. p. 7.

of Kashmir and in lieu of his services, he got permission from his master to conquer Kishtwar, which happened to be the erstwhile *Jagir* of his predecessors.²² Deception rather than courage singularised Gulab Singh's next and the most important exploit. In 1819, he sought permission of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to crush another peasants' uprising led by Mian Dedo in the hills of Jammu.²³

Right in the beginning of the second decade, Mian Dedo had challenged the occupation of Jammu by the Sikhs. He rebelled against the Sikh dominance, represented, and guided the uncurbed spirit of the Dogras. His defiance of the Sikh authority had popular backing, so, the Lahore Durbar failed to stamp out the popular rebel and his associates. He organized a violent struggle to uproot the Sikh domination to save the dignity and honour of the Dogras of the Jammu region. He gave a call to refuse land revenue to the joint Dogra-Sikh authority of Jammu. Both, the peasants and the *Jagirdars* responded to his call. It was in fact a violent peasants' revolt under the leadership of Mian Dedo, who dominated the political scenario of Jammu and the hills for a complete decade from 1810 to 1821, until his death. Mian Dedo, keeping in view his own scarcity of men and material and the strength of his enemy, decided to resort to guerrilla tactics.²⁴ The depredations of Mian Dedo kept the Lahore Durbar in a constant state of fright and rendered it incapable of keeping an effective control on Jammu and its surrounding regions. Bawa Satinder Singh, records in his book: *Mian Dedo used to roam the country with a large gang of followers, bidding open defiance to the Sikh measures and gained much popularity by robbing the wealthy and distributing it among the destitute.*²⁵ *The local Rajput chiefs sympathized with him and afforded no assistance to the Lahore Durbar. At this time, the whole of the area behind Jammu was terrorised by this intrepid chief.*²⁶ Through his deeds, he was so popular in the hills of Jammu that his word was law in the interior and wherever he went, he was welcomed. The people of the hills also offered him food and shelter. Concisely, very soon he acquired the image of the 'Robin Hood' of the hills. G.C. Smyth, a contemporary English historian has depicted a picture of Mian Dedo's skirmishes with the forces of the Lahore Durbar. He records in the following words:²⁷

There was a garrison of about two thousand men in Jummoo, but Deedo hesitated not to attack the place on several occasions by night or by day, though his force sometimes numbered only fifty or sixty men. In one of these assaults, he burnt down nearly the whole place and carried off a great

22. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, p. 138.

23. Amar Nath, *Zafarnama-e-Ranjit Singh*, ed. Sita Ram Kohli (Lahore 1928), p.141.

24. G.C.Smyth, *op.cit.*, p. 253.

25. Bawa Satinder Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

26. K.M.Panikkar, *op.cit.*, p. 27.

27. G.C.Smyth, *op.cit.*, pp. 253-54.

part of the moveable property of the Siek inhabitants. After these exploits, he would disappear as suddenly as he came, and the Seiks never ventured to pursue him a musket shot from the walls. It is said seldom fifteen days passed without an achievement of this kind, and according to tradition, Deedo from time to time, slew, with his own hand, above three hundred of his enemies, the Seiks. On more than one occasion, this bold brigand has been known to enter Jummoo at the dusk of the evening with a band of two or three hundred men, the garrison offering no resistance, but hiding themselves wherever they would find places. After putting to the sword all the Seiks they met with, the robbers would spend the night carousing round fires, which they had lit in the Mundee (the forum of the place) and on which they cooked their evening meal. At the dawn of the day, they would decamp unmolested, taking with them whatever they thought worth the carriage.

G.C.Smyth further records, that in 1812, Mian Dedo probably tired of his fugitive life and allured by the promise of pardon from the Lahore Durbar surrendered. However, immediately suspecting treachery he set upon his squad killed five men of his escort and returned to wild predatory. Then once again, he created havoc in the hills of Jammu and contributed huge losses to the Lahore Durbar. The Lahore authorities found it extremely difficult to deal with Mian Dedo. So they constantly changed one Diwan after the other. For example, in 1813, Lahore authorities replaced Diwan Ajit Singh Khullal by Chowdhary Dullu, a former local minister who was required to deposit rupees one lakh and seventy thousand annually as revenue to the Lahore Durbar. The new Diwan was also not feeling comfortable and resigned after sometime. Now, Jammu was farmed out to Diwan Bhiwani Dass, he was given clear instructions to penalize the rebellious people, strictly maintain law and order, and to collect revenue at any cost. However, the authorities later reduced the amount of the revenue to rupees one lakh.²⁸ With the view to realize revenue from the people he committed atrocities to terrorise them. Nevertheless, he could not succeed in his mission. By then, Mian Dedo had established his full control over the trade route that runs between Kashmir and Lahore and did not allow the caravans to pass through Jammu resulting in huge losses to the Lahore Durbar. Mian Dedo once plundered the presents, which had been dispatched by Pandit Birbal Dhar from Kashmir to Lahore for the personal use of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This event undermined the authority of the Maharaja and posed a very serious challenge to the territorial integrity of the Sikh Raj. Now, the Maharaja had three options, to withdraw his authority from Jammu, eliminate Mian Dedo, or expel him across Sutlej. However, there was no question of withdrawing the Lahore Durbar's authority as it could have

28. Sita Ram Kohli, *Catalogue of Khalsa Darbar Records*, Vol.II, (1927), p.59.

encouraged other hill chiefs of Jammu and Kangra region to defy the Lahore Durbar and assert independence. So, the Maharaja resorted to other options for which Gulab Singh volunteered himself to lead an expedition against one of his relatives in Jammu. Nothing could have been more gratifying to the Maharaja than the assurance of Gulab Singh to fight Mian Dedo. Since Gulab Singh was going to deal with a formidable foe, the "Robin Hood" of the Jammu hills, he decided to further arm Gulab Singh with dignity, honour and extra authority to enable him to effectively deal with Mian Dedo.²⁹ Accordingly, the Maharaja bestowed a *Khillat* on him and appointed him the supreme commander of the military operations against Mian Dedo.³⁰ It was a diplomatic stroke of the Lahore Durbar than the merit of Gulab Singh. It was just to placate him that the celebrated commanders of the Lahore Durbar like Jagat Singh Atariwala, Attar Singh, and some other senior chiefs of the Lahore Durbar were deliberately by-passed.

Further, on the request of Gulab Singh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh set free Mian Chaffu and Mian Diwanu, the important chiefs of Jammu who were languishing in Sheikhpura fort as prisoners from last seven years. The Sikh authorities persuaded both these chiefs in confinement and assured them of pardon and the reward of *jagirs*, with a view to placate and attract the other associates of Mian Dedo and to isolate the latter. Thus, the Lahore Durbar experimented in Jammu with the policy of the divide and rule, which had recently paid good dividend to the British in India. Because of this stratagem, the associates of Mian Dedo, like Mian Diwanu, Mian Dharam Singh both from Raipur, Pro Darohra and some others, deserted him and tendered their submission to the Lahore Durbar to be rewarded with *Jagirs*. When Gulab Singh moved to Jammu, they joined him and were ready to measure their swords with Mian Dedo, their former associate and leader. Gulab Singh, without wasting any moment rushed towards Jugti, the ancestral village of Mian Dedo. However, Mian Dedo had anticipated an attack, left his house, and finally sought refuge on the Trikuta Hills. Gulab Singh, with the assistance of his associates, chased him and surrounded the hills from all the sides. It was exactly during these days, when Gulab Singh was pursuing Mian Dedo that Maharaja Ranjit Singh on November 30, 1820 granted the *talluqa* of the *Chakla* of Jammu, as a *jagir* to Mian Kishora Singh and his three sons, Gulab Singh, Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh, and not individually to Gulab Singh as over emphasized in the *Gulabnama*.³¹ Of course, it was conferred collectively to the entire Dogra family. According to the *qabuliat* (the deed of acceptance), which begins, *Mankeh Mian Kishora Singh, Mian Gulab Singh wa Mian Dhian Singh wa Mian Suchet*

29. M.L. Kapur, *History of Jammu and Kashmir State*. p. 41.

30. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, p.152.

31. Kanahya Lal, *Tarikh-e-Punjab*, (1877), p. 484.

Singh.³² The *talluqa* of the *Chakla* of Jammu also included small principalities of Kotli, Patti-Bhoti, Chenani, Kishtwar, Sumartha and Bandralta.³³ On the issue of the grant of the *Rajgi* of Jammu to the Dogra family, Shahmat Ali, a contemporary historian of the Punjab, has recorded in his account: *Mian Kishora Singh, the father of Dhian Singh, was raised by the Sikh Chieftain to the Raj of Jammu when the administration of the place was conducted by Gulab Singh.*³⁴ While Sohan Lal, the Court historian of the Lahore Durbar, also records in his book: *on 16th of the Month of Maghar, 1236 H.E. corresponding to Samvat 1877 Bikrami, Mian Kishora Singh was entrusted with the management of Jammu town by His Highness*³⁵ (That His Highness entrusted Mian Kishora Singh with the management of Jammu town). Therefore, it is beyond doubt that Mian Kishora Singh, the father of Gulab Singh, was the first person of this Dogra family to receive the *Khillat* of *Rajgi* of Jammu at a less known place Mirpur Chumak from Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the presence of *Miser Dewan Chand*, one of the important *Dewans* of the Lahore Durbar. Undoubtedly, Maharaja Ranjit Singh deliberately did not give full publicity to this grant of the title *Raja* to Mian Kishora Singh, for obvious reasons.³⁶ However, the official records of the Lahore Durbar indicate that the grant of the *Rajgi* to the Dogra family was a conditional one. The Dogra family was required to offer four hundred cavalymen to the Sikh Maharaja and hold themselves in readiness, for rendering suitable service whenever summoned by the Lahore Durbar. They must guard the route to Kashmir,³⁷ used by the caravans of *Pashmina* (shawl wool) traders and pilgrims. They must reimburse any loss incurred by the travellers. They must arrest and hand over Mian Dedo, the rebel, kill him, or drive him beyond the *Satlej*.³⁸

Nevertheless, Sohan Lal, an authority on this period, has given a detailed and credible picture. According to him, Mian Kishora Singh and his three sons, on November 29, 1820, signed *Qabuliat* or the deed of acceptance and thereafter, the *Sanad* granting the *jagir* of Jammu to them was issued on November 30, 1920.³⁹ Certainly, the grant of *Rajgi* to Mian Kishora Singh boosted the moral of the demoralized Dogra family, who were unsuccessful hitherto in accomplishing the assigned task. Ultimately, in June

32. M.S. No: M/503, Punjab State Archives, Patiala.

33. *Ibid.*, Kishtwar was an independent state and was by no mean subordinated to any power. However, other principalities were subordinated to Jammu. Thus, with the grant of Kishtwar as a *Jagir* to the Dogra family, Gulab Singh got a mandate to conquer Kishtwar.

34. *The Sikhs And Afghans*, 1839, p.94.

35. *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Daftar II, p.281.

36. Kirpa Ram, *op.cit.*, p.139.

37. *The History of the Sikhs*, p.19.

38. Copy of an agreement between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Jammu family, November 15, 1820, "CSD."

39. Sohan Lal, *op.cit.*, Vol.II, p.281.

1821, Gulab Singh was able to shoot down Mian Dedo on the sacred Trikuta-hills. However, before his death he had affected losses to the Lahore Durbar. When Maharaja Ranjit Singh received the news of the death of Mian Dedo, he further rewarded Gulab Singh with an additional *jagir*.⁴⁰ Finally, the Maharaja deputed Gulab Singh to conquer Rajouri, Bhimber and Kishtwar and was pleased with Dogra family's territorial acquisition in the hills of Jammu region. Moreover, the Dogra family restored law and order in the hills and established peace and tranquility in the entire Jammu region that had been eluding the Maharaja of Lahore for long. However, after stabilizing the political conditions in the Jammu region Raja Kishora Singh died in the second week of June 1822. On June 16, Maharaja Ranjit Singh proceeded from Lahore to Jammu to condole the death of its ruler. He deliberately followed the route of Deva-Batala just to assert his authority over the recalcitrant territory inhabited by rebellious groups like the Chib, Bhau and Langeh. Earlier in 1820, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, himself had not only punished them, but had also burnt their principal town of Deva-Batala. The Dogra brothers went to Akhnoor to receive him, where the Maharaja expressed his condolences over the sad demise of raja Kishora Singh. The Maharaja encamped on the right bank of the river Chenab in the scorching heat of mid June for two days i.e., on 16th and 17th. It was exactly here that the Maharaja made up his mind to install Gulab Singh as the ruler of Jammu in recognition of his services to the Lahore Durbar and his ability to maintain law and order in Jammu and its adjoining hills. Therefore, immediately after encamping, he obtained a joint undertaking from the Dogra brothers, in which they reaffirmed their allegiance to the Lahore Durbar. Then, on June 17, the Maharaja, himself performed the *Raj-Tilak* ceremony of Gulab Singh and conferred the government of Jammu on him. On the same day by the same deed, Maharaja Ranjit Singh entrusted the government of Bandralta and Sumartha to Mian Suchet Singh, the youngest brother of Gulab Singh.⁴¹ However, to the chagrin of many on this occasion, Dhian Singh, the younger brother of Gulab Singh and the most favoured person of the Dogra family of Jammu neither was awarded any *Jagir* nor was he conferred with title of the *raja*.

In conclusion, one can say that Jammu had the varying relationships with the Lahore Durbar during the period under study. Both, the Dogra warriors Mian Dedo and Mian Gulab Singh opened new but opposing chapters in the history of the Dogra-Sikh relations. Mian Dedo, the *jagirdar* of Jugti, challenged the occupation of the Jammu kingdom by the Sikhs. His primary motive was to render the Lahore Durbar weak by depriving it of the

40. Shahmat Ali, *op.cit.*, p.94.

41. Document No. M/504, Punjab State Archives, patiala. However, on June 20, 1827 Dhian Singh, the younger brother of Raja Gulab Singh was conferred the title of the *raja* and the *Jagir* of Bhimber, Chibhal and Punch. (Document No. M/507, Punjab State Archives, Patiala).

revenues of this region and finally to expel them from Jammu. That made him a very popular and undisputed peasant's leader of Jammu, who dominated the political scene of this region with his guerrilla tactics for the entire decade from 1810 to 1820. Virtually, he had created havoc by terrorizing the officials of the Lahore Durbar at Jammu, who also found it difficult to run day-to-day administration and pleaded with the Maharaja to replace the Sikh establishment of Jammu with a Dogra dispensation. That appears to have led Maharaja Ranjit Singh to hand over the administration of the Jammu to his most trusted and influential family of Jammu, who had by then distinguished themselves in several military expeditions and some adventures of diplomacy as well.

The conferring of Jammu *Jagir* collectively to the Jammu family was another glaring example of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's diplomacy. Maharaja Ranjit Singh unusually conferred the *Jagir* of Jammu collectively on the Dogra family keeping in view the possibility of the assassination of Gulab Singh at the hands of Mian Dedo. In case of death of Gulab Singh, his younger brothers were bound to continue this operation against Mian Dedo until its conclusion. It evinces that Maharaja Ranjit Singh highly distracted by the depredations of Mian Dedo and now he was determined to get rid of him at any cost. Thus, the Dogra family also substantiated that their political ambitions can undermine their social considerations. However, finally, it was the threat of Mian Dedo to the Lahore Durbar that compelled Maharaja Ranjit Singh to hand over the government of Jammu to Mian Kishora Singh, who was presumed to stabilize the political conditions in this region and maintain peace. However, after the deaths of Mian Dedo and Kishora Singh the Maharaja conferred the *Raj* (government) of Jammu on Gulab Singh purely keeping into view his services to the Lahore Durbar and his ability to provide politico-economic stability to this region. However, unlike the grant of the *Khillat* of *Rajgi* to raja Kishora Singh, the grant of Jammu *Raj* to Gulab Singh was celebrated with great pomp and show in which Maharaja Ranjit Singh coronated Gulab Singh as the ruler of Jammu and himself performed his *Raj-Tilak* ceremony. However, contrary to the popular belief in Jammu and the Punjab that Maharaja Ranjit Singh had conferred the government of Jammu to Gulab Singh, raja Kishora Singh, the father of the latter was bestowed the *Rajgi* of Jammu.

Of course, the coronation of Gulab Singh as the ruler of Jammu was the most significant event in the Dogra history like the appointment of (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh as the Governor of Lahore by Zaman Shah in the history of the Punjab. From the beginning of Gulab Singh's professional and political career, he reversed the history of Dogra-Sikh relations. The Dogras and the Sikhs were hostile to each other before the rise of Gulab Singh in the Lahore Durbar. However, with his acts of good faith, Gulab Singh overhauled this relationship and cultivated cordial relations with the Sikhs.

So, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, himself honoured him by performing his *Raj-Tilak* ceremony. Gulab Singh restored law and order in the newly acquired kingdom. The entire trouble of the Lahore Durbar ended. Ultimately, peace prevailed in both these kingdoms, which gave rise to trade and commerce between Jammu and Lahore, and the outer world. The city of Lahore emerged as the main market of the people of Jammu. Briefly, the Dogra and the Sikh, both the dominant communities of Jammu and Lahore, developed a sense of mutual understanding and toleration, which led to the economic prosperity in these regions.

WHY ARE WE SENTIMENTAL ABOUT MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH?

*Surjit Hans**

I propose to answer this question not with enthusiastic statements but with statistics. In 1980 I estimated per capita income of the Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It turned out to be Rs.18/-. It is more indicative of the scale than accurate figure. Later I discovered that the *Cambridge Economic History of India* estimates per capita income of pre-British India between Rs.15/- and 20/-. These are the lowest and the highest limits of the estimate, not that the income varied at places between these limits.

In 1980 per capita income of India was Rs.1630/- and that of the Punjab was Rs.2674/-. A hundredfold rise in prices between 1830 and 1980 would make Ranjit Singh's Punjab more prosperous than India after one hundred and fifty years - a sad reflection in colonialism (Between 1873 and 1980 prices increased 42 times; the assumption is that between 1830 and 1870 the price increase 2.5 fold. If gold prices are taken into consideration the price increase is much more, thus the estimate is on the lower side).

That the present day Punjab is only 1.5 times more prosperous than Ranjit Singh's speaks of the unsatisfactory rate of progress. Thus India and Punjab has material reasons to be enthusiastic about Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

A word about prosperity under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. According to Prof. Nurul Hasan the Maharaja successfully worked the jagirdari system of Akbar in the nineteenth century whereas the Mughal failed it in the eighteenth century. Secondly, the colonization of Multan should be kept in mind. It had 23 non-perennial canals stretching to 679 miles. The British were impressed enough by the Multani canals to introduce almost universally perennial canals in the Punjab.

In 1881 the Sikhs in the Punjab was 7.58 percent of the population. In the beginning of the nineteenth it could stand at 4 percent, the farthest (Social mobility leads to comparative increase in population).

Peter Laslett makes the English ruling class in 1800 constitute 2 percent of the population. Even today the same percentage is placed in the supertax paying bracket. Let us assume it to be the anthropological limit of the ruling class. We also know that the Sikhs constituted half the ruling class of the Maharaja (below). It leads to a startling disclosure. After every four Sikhs one was in the ruling class. It is unheard of social differentiation the

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Rehitnamas bemoan as if emphasis on Sikh *rehat* could bring back the earlier egalitarian community. It also explains the formal collapse of Sikh literary genre of *Gurbilas*, making *Suraj Parkash* a formal disaster by the greatest Sikh poet.

Using 1881 figures, we find 7.58 percent Sikhs are 49 percent of the ruling class under Maharaja Ranjit Singh; 40 percent Hindus are 28 percent in the ruling class; 51 percent of the Muslims are 16 percent in the rulers. The 5 percent Europeans in the ruling class without any basis in the population presage the Western dominance to come.

These figures explain a number of things. The Sikhs are 'genuinely' selfish to be enamoured of the Maharaja. The figures also tell why Sikh leadership was not acceptable to the Hindus after annexation. It also explains why the British rule was welcome to the Muslims. Any talk of secularism is bunkum that the Maharaja was as secular as India today is certainly true.

Punjab under Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a militarized state. In 1849 excluding Kashmir but including the districts (Sikh) of Ludhiana, Ferozepur and Ambala the population was 1.27 crores. The Maharaja's army numbered 1.25 lakhs i.e. one percent of the population. In 1980 by this count Indian army should have run into 70 lakhs. In fact it was one-fourth or one-fifth of it. Out of an annual income of 3.25 crores the Maharaja spent 1 crore on the army. In a way Sikh rule collapsed under the weight of militarism.

Punjabis under Maharaja Ranjit Singh had no use for watches, glasses (spectacles) and coaches (because there were no roads). The army did not move at night fearing dacoits. In 1826 England had 15 thousand steam engines; we had none. In 1800 the developed West was richer than the rest of the world in the ratio of 2 to 1. Today it is 60 to 1. The Maharaja was aware of his material weakness. Let us hope that the political class in India is aware of the enormity of the gap. The gap also accounts for our foreign policy doldrums. Certainly Maharaja Ranjit Singh was in a sounder position. Hence the celebrations.

*I am grateful to Prof. S.S. Gill, Punjabi University, Patiala for his extensive help.

1. 'ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਮੇਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਆਰਥਿਕਤਾ' ਸੁਰਜੀਤ ਹਾਂਸ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦਾ ਗੌਰਵ; ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸੰਪਾ. ਸ.ਸ. ਨੂਰ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਕਾਦਮੀ, ਦਿੱਲੀ, 1988.
2. *Masters of Sociological Thought*, L.A. Coser, H.C. Jovanovich, N.V., 1971, 30.
3. *Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh*, Garrett & Chopra, Language Deptt., 1970.
4. *Imperial Rule in Punjab: The Conquest and Administration of Multan 1818-1881*, J.R. Rosebury (III), Manohar, 1987.
5. *European Culture and Overseas Expansion*, Carlo M. Cipolla, Penguin, 1970.
6. 'Imperialism and Globalisation', Samir Amin, *Monthly Review*, June 2001, (Vol. 53, No.2) Kharagpur.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION UNDER RANJIT SINGH - A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

Anju Suri nee Anju Arora*

Some modern historians of Ranjit Singh have discussed, in their respective works, the main features of the judicial administration of Ranjit Singh on the basis of contemporary sources.¹ This paper seeks to attempt a critical appraisal of the practical functioning of administration of justice under Ranjit Singh.

Ranjit Singh's judicial administration may be said to be a fusion of the Mughal and *misaldari* systems with some elements of the British Indian system still in the realm of his aspiration. He had certainly brought about some significant improvements here and there in the systems which he had inherited from the Mughals and *misaldars*; continuity as well as change is perceptible.

At the apex of the administration of justice was the Maharaja himself. He was the fountain of justice as well as the final authority in judicial matters. A benevolent despot to all intents and purposes, he considered dispensation of justice as his primary duty. The chroniclers of Ranjit Singh's court, Munshi Sohan Lal Suri and Diwan Amar Nath praise him for his love of justice. He had a petition box placed in a part of the palace accessible to everybody and kept the key of the box in his own possession. The petitions put in the box were read out to him and he used to take suitable action promptly.² An alternative method for the aggrieved person to seek justice from the Maharaja was that he would appear in the public *Darbar* and shouted '*dohai, Maharaja dohai* (mercy Maharaja, mercy). The Maharaja after listening to his complaint took instant action to redress his grievance. According to Sohan Lal Suri, the people could make complaints of all kinds to the Maharaja at the time of his daily ride.³ The

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1. See S.R. Kohli, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, (in Punjabi) (Delhi, 1953), pp. 218-21; G.L. Chopra, *The Punjab as Sovereign State, 1799-1839* (Hoshiarpur, second edition, 1974), pp. 88-91; N.K. Sinha, *Ranjit Singh* (Calcutta, third edition, 1951), pp. 147-48; B.J. Hasrat, *Life and Times of Ranjit Singh* (Nabha, 1977), pp. 306-09; Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Times* (New Delhi, 1990), pp. 208-14; K.K. Khullar, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (New Delhi, 1980), pp. 173-74; Fauja Singh, *Some Aspects of State and Society under Ranjit Singh* (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 139-70.

Of these, Fauja Singh has made a scholarly and penetrating analysis of the laws, courts, procedure and punishments during his rule.

2. W.L.M. Gregor, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I (London, 1846), pp. 288-89.

3. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Daftar - III, Part II, p. 284.

Maharaja would take speedy action and if a case required investigation it was sent to the official concerned for quick decision. He had issued strict orders to the executive-cum-judicial officials that they should not practice high-handedness and oppression on the people⁴ and to the *adalatis* that they should be just and merciful in their decisions.⁵ In a significant order issued to Sardar Amir Singh and Faqir Nuruddin it was stated that should 'His Highness' or his sons, Kanwars Kharak Singh and Sher Singh, Raja Kalan Bahadur (Dhian Singh), Raja Suchet Singh or Jamadar Khushal Singh, commit any inappropriate act, it should be brought to the notice of His Highness immediately, and further that strict instruction be issued to the Sardars to refrain from inappropriate acts or practising high-handedness on the people—be they wood-cutters, fodder-vendors, oil-vendors, horse-shoers, factory-owners, etc.⁶

The Maharaja decided all types of cases - civil and criminal, original and appellate. No matter was too small or too great to be brought before the personal attention of the Maharaja; sometimes even conjugal conflicts were decided by him.⁷

According to William Osborne, the execution of cases dealt by the Maharaja "are very prompt and simple... He is himself accuser, judge and jury; and five minutes is about the duration of longest trial at Lahore."⁸ No doubt, the cases were decided speedily by Ranjit Singh but the cases which called for investigation took quite some time to be decided so that full justice might be done.

"The most creditable trait in Runjeet's character", writes Alexander Burnes, "is his humanity; he has never known to punish a criminal with death since his accession to power".⁹ He is 'mild and merciful as a ruler', observes another English visitor.¹⁰ He never awarded capital punishment even when an attempt was made on the life of the Maharaja himself.¹¹ In the matter of justice he was considerate to the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs alike. In the trial of cases of Hindus and Sikhs the Hindu *shastras* and customs and traditions of the two communities were kept in view. The cases of the

4. For example, the Maharaja issued an order to Faqir Nuruddin, administrator of Lahore, to the effect that no person should practise high-handedness and oppression on the people and even if His Highness himself should issue an inappropriate order against any resident of Lahore, it should be clearly brought to his notice so that it might be amended. Wahiduddin, *The Real Ranjit Singh* (Patiala, 1981), p.17.

5. For instance, Sujan Rai, Darogha-I-Adalat was instructed to the effect that while administering justice he should always keep before his eyes religious honesty and avoid tyranny and cruelty to any of the poor. H.L.O. Garrett and G.L.Chopra (ed.), *Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh, 1810-1817* (Reprint Patiala, 1970), pp. 93-94.

6. Wahiduddin, *op.cit.*, pp.18-19.

7. K.K.Khullar, *op.cit.*, p.173.

8. W.G. Osborne, *The Court and Camp of Ranjeet Singh* (London, 1840), p.182.

9. Alexander Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara*, Vol. III (London, 1834), p.167.

10. Osborne, *op.cit.*, p.93.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 94; Wahiduddin, *op.cit.*, p. 22.

Muslims were allowed to be tried by the *qazis* in accordance with the Muslim law (*shariat*).

According to Henry Prinsep, no courts of justice had been established anywhere in the time of Ranjit Singh.¹² This remark is plainly incorrect. A series of courts had been established by the Maharaja in various parts of the kingdom such as *nazim's* court, *kardar's* court, Adalat-I-Ala at Lahore, special courts presided over by the *adalatis* in some towns and *qazi's* court. Thus almost all the executive officers, except the *adalatis* and *qazis*, as in the times of the Mughals, were entrusted with judicial powers. They tried civil and criminal cases of all types. There was, however, no regular hierarchy of courts for civil and criminal cases with definite powers and jurisdiction. The system in operation was considered convenient and economical. Sometimes the decisions of the *kardars*, *nazims*, *adalatis* and ministers were changed by the Maharaja. The *qazis'* courts were generally meant for the Muslims. Non-Muslims could also be appointed as *qazis*, as for example, Ventura (a Christian) and Kanu (a Hindu) acted as *qazis*.¹³

In the hierarchy of courts the village *panchayat* was the lowest and in a way the most important tribunal. It may be called 'people's court' as distinct from the 'official courts' mentioned above. The *panchayat*, in reality, was more often of the nature of an arbitration court than that of a state appointed judicial tribunal. The word *panchayat* literally means a court of five. Its members (generally influential landlords of the village) were "always chosen from men of the best reputation" and this court had 'high character for justice'.¹⁴ It settled the disputes of the villagers amicably and its decisions believed to be having the sanction of God (*puncho mein parmashwar*) were generally respected by the people. Sometimes the final adjustment of dispute in land was referred by the *panches* to an old inhabitant of the neighbouring village upon whose knowledge and experience they placed more reliance than on their own limited information.¹⁵

There were no written or codified laws during Ranjit Singh's reign. According to Steinbach, "custom and caprice are substituted for the *lex scripta*".¹⁶ Muslim (*shariat*) law was applied by the *qazis* in deciding cases of the Muslims, but generally the cases of all the people, whether Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, were decided by customs and conventions.

The Sikh customs of marriage and succession to property prevailing among the Sikhs of *Majha* and *Malwa* were taken note of by all the courts

12. H.T. Prinsep, *Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab and Political Life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh* (Calcutta, 1834), p.182.

13. Fauja Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 149-50; Bhagat Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.210-11.

14. Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812), pp.127-28.

15. Steinbach, *The Punjab Being a Brief Account of the Country of the Sikhs* (London, 1845), p.83.

16. *Ibid.*, p.71.

from the village *panchayat* to that of the Maharaja. Towards the closing years of Ranjit Singh's reign there existed a local record office called *Qazikhana* or *Munshikhana* in most of the *taaluqas* where records were kept. Civil suits pertaining to alienation of landed property were decided on the evidence obtained from these records.¹⁷ Not satisfied with the state of the law, the Maharaja appointed Bahadur Singh Hindustani to prepare civil and criminal codes and Sohan Lal Suri was deputed to assist him.¹⁸ The exercise, however, proved abortive. According to Fauja Singh, he decided to abandon the exercise because he saw no utility in pursuing it any further; there was really not much necessity for codification.¹⁹ But a more plausible reason for this was that it was an arduous task which required a team of highly competent persons to accomplish it successfully. Ranjit Singh's involvement at that time in more serious problems pertaining to the security and strengthening of his kingdom on the north-west frontier may be considered another reason. It is significant to note that the Maharaja had procured from Captain Wade, in 1835, a book on Regulations of troops, and he assigned the task of translating it to Ventura, Fox and Sohan Lal Suri.²⁰ This tends to suggest that the Maharaja had felt the need for and was keen on modernizing the civil and military laws of the state just as he had been keen on modernizing his army in which, of course, he had eminently succeeded.

As regards punishments for crimes, it has already been said that Ranjit Singh deliberately refrained from giving capital punishment even in cases of heinous crimes like gruesome murders, and there is no doubt that death sentence was not awarded to the culprits in the major parts of his kingdom. The punishment of mutilation of limbs of the body such as one or both hands, nose or ears was given to 'incorrigible culprits' (for offences such as violent theft, robbery, adultery, seduction, etc.) but it could be atoned for by the payment of money. "A tolerable bag full of rupees is often accepted as compensation in full for the retention of a limb or feature."²¹

The punishments of death, inhuman tortures and amputation of limbs were, however, commonly given in the territories of Peshawar and Hazara. Avitabile, the governor of Peshawar was in the habit of giving draconian punishments to unruly inhabitants of that area. In dealing with the *pathans*, he had not only followed the ruthless methods of Hari Singh Nalwa, but had added his own 'barbarous and savage measures'. He himself confessed in a rather boastful tone that he would hang about fifty of the habitual criminals everyday and make an exhibition of them dangling from the wooden posts erected by him for the purpose. This was repeated for

17. G.L.Chopra, *op.cit.*, p.90.

18. Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh: Maharaja of the Punjab* (London, 1962), p.161.

19. Fauja Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.144-45.

20. Roshan Lal Ahuja, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh: A Man of Destiny* (Delhi, 1983), p.62.

21. Steinbach, *op.cit.*, p.72.

many days till there was a 'scarcity of brigands and murders'. Thereafter he dealt with the liars and tale-bearers by cutting out their tongues, and when a surgeon appeared who professed to be able to restore their speech he cut out his tongue also.²² 'For every crime, a head' - was his motto. It is said that for rape, one sepoy was thrown from a rock and another was stoned to death. He would brick up those who failed to pay their tribute.²³ "The pleasure which he took in seeing people hung up by the dozens", observes Honigberger, "must be attributed to the General's morbid mental attitude".²⁴ The inhuman punishments inflicted by him have been justified on the ground that short of these punishments it would not have been possible to maintain law and order in those turbulent territories.²⁵ Be that as it may, when Ranjit Singh came to know about any act of high-handedness on the part of Avitabile he would issue orders to restrain him. For instance, Sohan Lal Suri records that the Maharaja was furious on learning that Avitabile had collected some amount unduly from the *khatris* of Peshawar and had also demolished their houses. He sent urgent orders to Avitabile to have their houses rebuilt and return the money exacted from them unduly.²⁶

According to Honigberger, many Muslim tribesmen encouraged by the presence of a Christian governor (Avitabile) who was not supposed to regard cow as a sacred animal, committed the crime of slaughtering cows for which they were given capital punishment.²⁷ Nor was the death-sentence for cow-killing confined to the Peshawar province. Diwan Moti Ram, the *nazim* of Kashmir is also reported to have given capital punishment to several Muslims for cow-killing.²⁸ Obviously, such punishments were given without the consent or approval of the Maharaja who considered a heavy fine as sufficient punishment for this offence.²⁹

The most common punishment, however, was *jurmana* or fine. Not only the person found guilty had to pay *jurmana* but the person adjudged guiltless had also to pay money in the form of *shukrana* (thanks-giving). In civil cases pecuniary contributions were also levied; the plaintiff, if he carried his point, paid the *shukrana* and the defendant had to make payment

22. J.J. Cotton, *Life of Avitabile*, cited in E.Grey and H.L.O. Garrett, *European Adventurers in Northern India, 1785-1849* (Reprint Patiala, 1970), p. 131.

23. Gulcharan Singh, *Ranjit Singh and His Generals* (Jullundur, 1976), p. 149.

24. J.M. Honigberger, *Thirty Five Years in the East* (Calcutta, 1852), p. 53.

25. Williams Barr remarks in this connection, "Disgusting as they (severe punishments) were it is to be feared that without them there would be no safety, neither for life, nor for property". William Barr, *Journal of a March from Delhi to Cabul* (London, 1844), pp. 286-87.

26. Sohan Lal Suri, *op.cit.*, Daftar III, Part-V. p. 116.

27. Honigberger, *op.cit.*, p. 53.

28. T. Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladakh, Iskardo*, p.73, cited in Amarjit Singh, *The Judicial Administration of Ranjit Singh*, p. 342.

29. For example in a case of cow-killing by the Muslims of Jullundur, reported by Ajodhia Das Adalati in 1812, the Maharaja ordered that a fine not less than rupees 3000 should be taken from the culprits. H.L.O. Garrett (ed.), *Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh, 1810-1817* (Reprint, Patiala, 1970), p. 35.

as a punishment for being in the wrong and consuming the Judge's time.³⁰ The court also charged twenty-five percent of the value of the property being decided in favour of a party as the state share. Likewise, on the recovery of the stolen goods twenty-five percent of the value of the goods had to be deposited in the state treasury as *shukrana*. For the heinous crimes of murder etc. atoned for, heavy fines were "levied according to the means of the offender, whose property is attached, and his family placed under restraint to enforce payment."³¹ Thus the administration of justice was a source of considerable income to the state. The other forms of punishment included imprisonment and confiscation of property,³² flogging, reprimand or rebuke by the Maharaja, inflicting wound on the forehead by a piece of hot iron, fancy punishment,³³ ordeal of hot water for judging innocence or guilt of the suspected offender, etc. The punishments were awarded by taking into consideration the social status and financial position of the culprit, the nature of crime, circumstances of commission of crime and avoidance of too much harshness.³⁴

Some contemporary European writers like Prinsep, Osborne and Steinbach, obviously judging from the standard of the judicial system then in operation in the western countries (like England and France) have denounced the judicial administration of Ranjit Singh, and dilated upon its inadequacies and shortcomings. According to them, there was no regular hierarchy of courts with definite powers and jurisdiction; the judges performed both executive and judicial functions, and sometimes even military functions in addition. There was no distinction between civil and criminal cases. There were no civil, criminal and penal codes and the cases were mostly decided by customs and conventions or by the caprice and discretion of the judges; "all concerns are transacted by oral testimony, verbal promises and agreements...and though these persons (witnesses) give their testimony on oath, money and favours are so unsparingly distributed to ensure a serviceable statement, that perjury is frequent, and justice a mere mockery."³⁵ Justice was regarded as an important source of income and it was generally the effort of the judicial officials to fleece the litigants, both the plaintiffs and defendants, guilty and guiltless. "The wealthy may secure justice but the indigent are likely to obtain something less. The larger the

30. Steinbach, *op.cit.*, p. 72.

31. *Ibid.*, pp.71-72. Bloodshed between *zamindars* in a boundary dispute was sometimes atoned for by giving a *nata*, or daughter in marriage to a relative of the deceased or commuted to the payment of 150 or 200 rupees or 125 *bighas* of land. *Ibid.*, p.84.

32. These punishments were generally awarded to those officials who were found guilty of embezzlement of revenue or extorted money by means of bribery.

33. According to this, the face of the culprit was blackened and he was made to sit on a donkey with his face towards the back of the animal and he was paraded in the streets of town or village.

34. Fauja Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.59-60.

35. Steinbach, *op.cit.*, p.73.

bribe the more chance of success. A case where the right is clear and undeniable, is often allowed to lie over, that the present may be augmented."³⁶ It has been further observed, "under such a system the poor man has little chance, the vagabond chief, urged to plunder by necessity, loses his nose or ears; but the wealthy robber and dexterous ruffian are unmolested". Much of the criticism of these writers may be attributed to their western pride and prejudice.

Malcolm, who wrote his account earlier than these writers, viewed the working of the judicial administration of Ranjit Singh more closely and candidly. Though 'rude and imperfect' having no fixed code,³⁷ he writes, this system was "most congenial to the temper of the people and best suited to the unsteady and changing character of their rule of government."³⁸ He adds that a Sikh priest who had been several years in Calcutta insisted with true patriotic prejudice that the Sikh administration of justice was superior to that of the English government which was "tedious, vexatious, and expensive, and advantageous only to clever rogues."³⁹ G.L. Chopra⁴⁰ and some other modern historians of Ranjit Singh have generally endorsed this viewpoint of Malcolm. They have advanced a number of arguments which helped check the abuse of authority on the part of the local judicial officials and ensured the smooth working of the system. First, the term of office of the judicial officials depended on their good behaviour. The consciousness that their dignity, prestige and social status, and even their private wealth and property, depending solely on the favour of their master, acted as a restraining influence on their arbitrary action. Secondly, during the Maharaja's frequent and unexpected tours complaints of bribery and corruption came to his notice. Knowing this, his officials were always apprehensive of the drastic action that might be taken against them and therefore they refrained from indulging in corruption. Thirdly, the Maharaja deputed special justices or inspectors from time to time to tour in different *parganas* for the purpose of hearing complaints against the local officials and they decided the cases on the spot. Fourthly, the judicial processes in taking action were not dilatory and expensive which were suitable to the rural and agricultural population of the Punjab.⁴¹ Fifthly, the Maharaja had given strict and oft-repeated guidelines to the effect that the principle of *dharm-karam* (equity-mercy) should always be followed in the dispensation

36. Princep, *op.cit.*, p. 195.

37. According to Malcolm, though the Sikh scriptures inculcate general maxims of justice, they are not considered, as the *Old Testament* is by the Jews, or the *Kuran* by the Muhammedans, as books of law.

38. Malcolm, *op.cit.*, p. 127.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 128, f.n.

40. "Though to all outward appearance, Ranjit's judicial system was crude and simple, yet in actual practice it eminently suited the social and political environment of the people of the Punjab." G.L. Chopra *op.cit.*, pp. 90-91.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 91; Bhagat Singh, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Times.*, p. 114.

of justice and these instructions were generally carried out.⁴²

This is not to suggest that the judicial administration of Ranjit Singh was free from defects or deficiencies. Petty cases and disputes in the villages were, of course, generally resolved by the *panchayats* according to customs and conventions, but in the absence of written laws for civil and criminal cases and penal code, decision had to be given by the judges and executive officials largely by their commonsense and caprice. With the result, the punishments given for various offences were not, indeed could not be, uniform in all parts of the kingdom. In spite of the orders issued by Ranjit Singh from time to time and his frequent tours to towns and *taaluqas*, the local judges practically wielded great discretion in deciding cases and awarding punishments. Though the Maharaja had never awarded capital punishment even for most heinous crimes, but the punishment of death and inhuman tortures was frequently given by Avitabile in Peshawar, as already mentioned at length. Perhaps he had been given extraordinary discretionary power to do so in order to maintain peace and order in the turbulent tribal territories. Similarly death sentence was given in Peshawar and even in Kashmir for the crime of cow-slaughter whereas elsewhere only fine or *jurmana* was levied for such an offence. The punishment of mutilation of limbs was given to certain criminals but for the same or similar crime *jurmana* was imposed on other culprits.

The Maharaja himself decided cases not according to definite norms of justice but by his sheer discretion and whims. Two examples may be given in this regard: (1) Fateh Singh Mann, an agriculturist had borrowed rupees 6000 from the money-lender, named Piyara *Khatr*i. Seven years elapsed but the borrower could not return money. When the case came before Ranjit Singh he decided that Fateh Singh should pay only rupees 1500 to the *Shahukar* and the matter was settled.⁴³ (2) Karam Singh Atariwala owed a debt of rupees 3000 to Sadhu Ram *Khatr*i. The Maharaja settled the matter by ordering Karam Singh to pay rupees 1600 to the money-lender.⁴⁴

Despite Ranjit Singh's periodic orders and strict instructions to the judges and officials to be honest and merciful in dispensing justice, the cases of corruption, extortion, oppression, embezzlement of government money and miscarriage of justice did occur from time to time in various parts of the kingdom, and it could not be possible for the Maharaja to intervene promptly and effectively in all the cases to provide justice due to lack of developed means of communication and his preoccupation elsewhere. Large judicial powers rested with the *jagirdars* both in civil and criminal matters. The *nazims* or *kardars* had no right of hearing appeals against the *jagirdar*'s

42. Fauja Singh, *op.cit.*, pp.164-65.

43. S.R.Kohli, *op.cit.*, p.219.

44. *Ibid.*

courts. The *jagirdars* often administered justice according to their caprice and whim.⁴⁵

Fine or *jurmana* (along with *shukrana*), as already mentioned, was the most common punishment but the amount of *jurmana* was not fixed for various offences. It was, therefore, very difficult to know exactly the amounts of fines collected by the judges. To cope with this difficulty *ijara* or contract was adopted in many parts of the kingdom as the mode of collecting the proceeds of justice from the judges.⁴⁶ The drawback of this practice is too obvious to need an explanation.

Disputes between different *zamindars*, between the *zamindars* and *jagirdars* and between the officials and *jagirdars* were not uncommon. Many a time such disputes would lead to violence and bloodshed, and they were often left to be settled by themselves. The Maharaja would intervene only occasionally, and sometimes only after the bloodshed between the parties had taken place.⁴⁷

It must, however, be said to the credit of Ranjit Singh that he was not unaware of these drawbacks. He exerted hard and took all possible measures to improve the state of affairs - at any rate, to mitigate the evil effects of the system in operation. He did not, perhaps could not also, bring radical changes in the system of justice on modern lines. A realist par excellence, he prudently compromised with the existing situation and circumstances, and succeeded in providing an eminently workable system which ensured the safety of life and property of the people to a large extent, and led to the maintenance of peace and order in the kingdom⁴⁸; the predatory propensity of the lawless elements of the people was to a great extent kept under restraint.⁴⁹ The smooth and successful working of the system, to whatever extent it was, may be attributed largely to the energetic endeavours of the Maharaja himself. His death and departure led to a marked deterioration in the law and order situation, accompanied by intrigues and murders among different factions of the *Darbar* in which the Maharaja and Prime Ministers were also involved; the supreme law-protectors, as it were, became the law-breakers.

45. B.J.Hasrat, *op.cit.*, p. 307.

46. Fauja Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 166.

47. For example, in April 1837 the men of Raja Gulab Singh and those of Diwan Sawan Mal were engaged in fighting and bloodshed in which several were killed or wounded on both sides (Sohan Lal Suri, *op.cit.*, Daftar III, p.351). In December 1837 there were violent disputes between the Sodhi cousins of Anandpur Sahib resulting in several casualties on both sides. When the Maharaja was informed about this he ordered that towers and posts constructed by them should be destroyed and a stern warning was given to them for the future. (*Ibid.*, p. 396).

48. According to the testimony of Baron Hugel, the Punjab was even safer than Hindustan under the British. Cited in N.K.Sinha, *op.cit.*, p. 148.

49. Charles Masson, *Narrative of various Journeys in Beluchistan, Afghanistan and the Punjab*, Vol.I (London, 1842), p. 426.

CHILD MARRIAGE AND THE STATE: JAMMU AND KASHMIR DURING 1846-1947

Sunita Gupta*

Child marriage was not prevalent, as one might expect in Jammu and Kashmir in the distant past.¹ As no definite age of marriage is mentioned in the *Rajatarangini*, it seems that pre-puberty marriages were not in vogue in ancient Kashmir.² The practice came into being only during the rules of the Afghans (1752-1819).³

During mid-Nineteenth century, the evil was prevalent among large sections of the population within the state territories, but the marriage of infant girls between the age of 0 to 5 years was perceptible only in the Jammu province mostly among the Hindus, and the proportion of both males and females married at an age below fifteen was the highest in the sub-montane and semi-mountainous tract (Jammu province).⁴ Muslims had also taken to it, but it was not so predominant and was found generally among the well to do families.⁵ The Sikhs usually did not marry until the age of puberty.⁶ The Buddhists usually favoured late marriage.

The word 'infant marriage' does not mean the same in India as it does in the western countries. In the latter, it was synonymous with cohabitation; whereas in India, it meant nothing of the sort. These were more in the nature of irrevocable betrothals. Normally the girl wife remained in the home of her husband's parents except for short intervals when she returned to her old home to see her parents. It was not until after the age of puberty that cohabitation between the young bride and bridegroom occurred.⁷ It was this sort of infant marriage, which was common among Dogras of the Jammu province.⁸

Contrary to the above usage, it has been found that among Mian Rajputs, when the girl was brought to the home as a bride - six or eight years old, she never went back to her former home. This regulation was evidently made in order that as little intercourse as possible be kept with the family

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1. *Census of India*, 1911, Vol. XX, part I, Kashmir, p.142.

2. Bamzai, P.N.K., *A History of Kashmir*, Meteropolitan Book Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1973, p.201.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 508; Koul, Pandit Anand, *The Kashmiri Pandits*, Utpal Publications, Delhi, 1991 p.35.

4. *A note on the J & K State*, 1928, p.52; *Census*, 1911, *op.cit.*, pp.147-149.

5. *Census of India*, 1901, Vol. XXIII, part I, Kashmir, p.88.

6. *Census of India*, 1941, Vol. XXII, part I and II, Kashmir, p.37.

7. *Census*, 1941, *op.cit.*, pp. 36-37.

8. Palit D.K., *Jammu and Kashmir Arms*, Palit and Dutt Publishers, Dehradun, 1972, p.32.

with whom they had been obliged.⁹

The evil results of child marriage are obvious, physical deterioration especially of the girl mother, birth of sickly and numerous children, domestic unhappiness and increase in the number of child widows.¹⁰ The figures extracted from the census reports show that in 1921, the proportion of females upto the age of 10 was high ranging between 913 and 1,001 to 1000 males, which was much above the general average of 810 for all ages. A considerable fall, however, took place between the ages of 10-40, owing to high female death rate during the reproductive period. On the other side, the male death rate was very excessive in the first few years of life and the males were usually in excess between the ages of 10-40. The figure makes it clear that mortality among males was greater between the ages of 0 and 12 years, whereas among females it was greater between the ages of 10 and 40 years.¹¹ Thus, child marriage resulted in increasing the number of child widows. A number of agencies urged the government to take steps for the prevention of child marriages in the state. Many social evils formed the chief planks of the first newspaper, the *Ranbir*, brought out in the Jammu from 1924, weekly newspaper *Vitasta* as well as *Martand* criticized the Govt. for not taking action against those who indulge in 'sins' like early marriage and those who opposed widow marriage.¹² The Brahman Sabha (1912) and the Mukshya Brahmana Mandal Sabha (1890), in their respective resolutions urged Maharaja Hari Singh to save the sinking Hindu community from the evil consequences of child marriage and introduce a measure making child marriage punishable.¹³ The need for passing joint resolution by different Sabhas to give this movement a fillip was felt.¹⁴

Before initiating a legislative measure, Maharaja Hari Singh wanted to carry public opinion with him in such a sensitive matter.¹⁵ The representatives of Jammu province called by him in May 1927, unanimously expressed the view to stop the practice by law.¹⁶ The government acted swiftly and promulgated in 1928 "Infant Marriage Prevention Regulation" which fixed the minimum marriageable age for boys at 18 and for girls 14. The violators were to be punished.¹⁷ It is important to note, that the State of

9. Drew, Frederic, *The Jammu and Kashmir Territories*, Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1971, pp.50-51.

10. *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. XXIV, part I, Kashmir p.169; J & K Govt. General Rewards, F. No. 854/224-G of 1927.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Khan, Mohammad Ishaq, *History of Srinagar, 1846-1947*, Aamir Publications, Srinagar, 1978, pp.175-178.

13. J & K Govt., General Deptt., F. No. 264/p.21 of 1928.

14. J & K Govt, General Records, F. No. 854/224-G of 1927; *The Ranbir*, Vol.I, May-June, 1924-25.

15. Wazir Ganga Nath, *A report on the Adm. Of J & K*, 1943, pp.56-57.

16. Representations of Jammu Province, May 18, 1927, J & K Govt, General Deptt., F. No. 1576/RG-52 of 1927; A Note on the Jammu and Kashmir State, 1928, pp.51-52.

17. Regulation No.1 of 1928 regarding prevention of infant marriage.

Jammu and Kashmir was one of the earliest to pass such legislation. The Regulation became a law in the state before the Sarda Act was passed in British India.¹⁸ The British Resident in Kashmir, Col. O'Gilvie was so impressed by the reforming zeal of the state administration that he said on the occasion of a dinner given in honour of Maharaja Hari Singh in 1929 that if the Europeans and general public of Kashmir knew what beneficial reforms are almost week by week being quietly and unostentatiously introduced they would be astonished.¹⁹ The citizens of Srinagar in an address presented on September 29, 1929 to Maharaja, thanked him for this reform. The Dogra Sabha (1904), Jammu also expressed similar feelings.²⁰ The legislative measure enacted by government did not enjoy universal support. Infact, only those, who were quite educated, gave their unstinted support to the measure. Whereas the orthodox elements complained that the proposed law meant interference in their religion. The institution of child marriage continued to play havoc with the life of the infants particularly in the villages.²¹

People thought that they would be sentenced at most to a fine or imprisonment and by considering it as an extra expenditure on marriage, they paid the fine thus reducing the law to nullity.²² The act was amended at a latter period to make it more effective.

During the first session of the State Assembly on Oct. 20, 1934, Lala Amar Nath Kohli (elected member), introduced a bill to amend the regulation No. 1 of 1928. He proposed to omit section 7 of the Regulation which reads: "No marriage which takes place in contravention of any provision of this Regulation shall be valid and legal for the purpose of conferring any right of succession or inheritance on the issue of such marriages",²³ According to him, it was harsh and hard hit on the poor children born a long time after the offence under this regulation had been committed.²⁴

Sardar Budh Singh, another member while opposing the amendment said, "How the issues of infant marriages can be regarded as legitimate when law forbids such marriages. People think that they will be sentenced at a most to a fine or imprisonment and when they spend three or four hundred rupees on the marriage itself they can reduce the law to a nullity by paying a small amount of fine. He opined that if this section was deleted, the marriage

18. *Census*, 1941, *op.cit.*, p.36; A note on J & K State, J & K Govt. General Deptt., F.No. 20/ad-30 of 1932.

19. J & K Govt. Pol. Deptt., F.No. C.S/P B-79 of 1929.

20. *Ibid*; Proceedings of the meeting of the Cabinet held at Srinagar, Aug. 2, 1928, J & K Govt. General Deptt., F.No. 1411/R-G-6 of 1928.

21. Wazir Ganga Nath, *op.cit.*, p.291.

22. *The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Debates*, Vol.I, 1934, pp.51-53.

23. *Ibid.*, pp.49-50; J & K Govt. Pol. Deptt., F.No. 153/R-4 of 1933.

24. *Ibid.*, pp.49-50.

of minors with their attendant evil will become common".²⁵

The amendment was approved by the Govt. but it decided to publish the amended bill to know public opinion. Important public bodies and newspapers gave their opinion in favour of the amendment.²⁶ *The Ranbir* favoured the amendment and stated that, "the fear of punishment alone does not deter the people from evil deeds. Laws are indeed beneficial but they should not aim at punishing those who never commit any crime. As infant marriage is unlawful, those who break the law deserve punishment. But it is unjust to deprive issue of right of inheritance and succession".²⁷

After considering the public opinion, the amended bill was passed and was called the 'Infant Marriage Prevention Amendment Bill of 1931 (1934 A.D.)'.²⁸ Thus was deleted section 7 of the Regulation.

The regulation was salutary in its main principles. When, however, the Act was actually put into operation, the government had to face many difficulties. In the first phase, the aggrieved parties represented to the government that the new rules had subjected them to embarrassment as the officials put objectionable questions while trying to adduce the positive proof of the age of the child in question. Secondly, the aggrieved people complained that the officials concerned were in the habit of implicating innocent parents in false cases framed on the basis of anonymous petitions.²⁹

While responding to the representations of the people, Govt. asked its officials concerned not to proceed against the parents unless there was a prima facie reason for supposing that the certificate of age obtained from *lambardar* in rural areas or from Mohalla officers in case of municipal areas was incorrect. The Govt. order, in addition, also directed the officials not to take any cognizance whatsoever of anonymous petition.³⁰

In the year 1931, there was an all round improvement in the proportion of spinsters due to the prevention of early marriage but still large remained to be done. Govt. felt that more could have been achieved if the law had been tightened.³¹

Such a step was thought necessary, as a few reports had been received against the people who had violated the regulation. It was considered that the machinery of prosecution was still far from being adequate and that the only means to overcome the reluctance to launch prosecution of relations and friends of the bride or bridegroom, who alone in such cases were likely to have knowledge of impending or actual breaches

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53.

26. *J & K Assembly Debates*, Vol. II, March 30 to April 11, 1935, p.443.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 443-444.

28. *Ibid.*, p.20.

29. Glancy Commission Report, Nov. 12, 1931, p.48.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Wazir Ganga Nath, A Report, *op.cit.*, p.292; *Census*, 1931, p.172.

of the provisions of this law was to make the offence cognizable. It was feared that this proposal, if given effect, would invite harassment from the police. But Wazir Ganganath, Chief Justice of J & K, in 1943 did not share this feeling. Instead, he asserted that had this been the deciding factor, then perhaps no penal legislation would have been enacted.³²

On the other hand, he opined that if the active offenders of this law i.e. the person who arranged and performed the marriage were punished that would not be of any help to the bride or bridegroom who had been victimized by the breach of law.³³ The chief justice suggested that the courts should be authorized to act on the information received on complaint or through other means; issue injunctions for the prevention of such marriages if they were satisfied that a child marriage in contravention of this act had been arranged or was to be solemnized.³⁴

The Govt. then decided to strengthen the law in two directions. A fear was expressed therein that a loophole would still remain, namely the parties would go outside the state, perform marriage and return to the state. To penalize the parties performing such type of marriages, the machinery of law was to be made as foolproof as possible.³⁵ This was done by bringing amendments in the regulation of 1928 and amended Regulation was called as "Infant Marriage Prevention Amendment Regulation of 1938".³⁶

The amended Regulation was to be applied to (i) all marriages celebrated within the state; between state subjects and servants of the state in any part of India; between state subjects who were domiciled in any part of India wherever they might be. The Regulation also empowered the court to take cognizance of any offence covered under this regulation, of course, upon a complaint made to it. The regulation required the complainant to execute a bond with or without sureties for a sum not exceeding one hundred rupees as security. The regulation besides also laid down that if such security was not furnished within a reasonable time, the complaint shall be dismissed. The offences under the amended Regulation and that of 1928 were made cognizable by police within whose local jurisdiction the offence was committed.³⁷

The law was tightened and machinery of prosecution made effective, yet during 1937-1938, 41 cases were reported under the Infant Marriage Regulation, of these 35 cases were disposed off.³⁸ The reasons for the continuance of the practice could be found in the statement contained in the Census Report of 1941, which stated that the Regulation was frequently

32. *J & K Assembly Debates*, Vol.I, Sept. 12, 1938, p.30; Wazir Ganga Nath, *op.cit.*, p.292.

33. Wazir Ganga Nath, *op.cit.*, p.292.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. *The J & K Assembly Debates*, Vol.I, Sept. 12, 1938, pp.42-44.

37. *Ibid.*, pp.43-44.

38. *Annual Adm. Report of J & K State, 1937-38*, p.124.

broken secretly in a number of cases³⁹ on account of difficulty of tracing the correct age in the villages in absence of a proper system of recording the age, it was difficult to bring such offences to light.⁴⁰ Moreover, some marriages continued to be performed in villages due to poverty, illiteracy, and customs such as "Dohri" among certain classes.⁴¹

During the decade from 1931 to 1941, the girls continued to be married under the age of fourteen, contrary to the law.⁴² As the nature of the case stood, it was difficult for the police to detect the offence. Very often it was found that it was only the person who had some grouse against the offender filed a complaint. Many people expressed innocence with regard to the evil consequences of the practice. In several cases, the offence came to light only after the law had been broken.⁴³

On the whole, comparison of the marriage statistics brings before us the fact that the proportion of child marriage decreased in 1941 in relation to the preceding years.⁴⁴ With the passage of time, many of the less conservative and progressive people appreciated the advantage of postponing the marriage of their daughters until an age when they were physically and mentally fit to endure the strain of pregnancy and childbirth. A tendency was growing among the educated classes to postpone the marriage to a latter age.⁴⁵

39. *Census*, 1941, p.141.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Dohri* system of marriage by exchange was followed strictly by the Thakkar Rajputs and others, according to which marriage was settled among those persons who had a female issue to offer in exchange to marry his son. *The J & K Assembly Debates*, Vol. XIV, April 7, 1945, p.14.

42. Biscoe, Tyndale, *An Autobiography*, Seeley Service and Co. Ltd., London, p.213.

43. Biscoe, Tyndale, *op.cit.*, p.213 ; *The J & K Assembly Debates*, Vol.1, Sept.12, 1938, p.30.

44. *Census*, 1941, p.37.

45. *Ibid.*, pp.36-37.

REFLECTIONS ON 1857 REVOLT : A STUDY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

Bal Krishan Shivram*

The most written-about event in Indian history is the uprising against British rule in 1857. The interest that the war engendered was partly because it was one of the last war of its kind, where courage and endurance rather than heavy weapons played a preponderant part, where beleaguered garrisons held out against great odds, and where walled cities were stormed in a manner that recalled the wars of the Middle ages, not the great battle of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, although the war was on a small scale and short enough in duration to be easily understood, it was apparent that great issues were being decided.

Historians have held divergent views about the nature of the outbreak of 1857 revolt. British historians like J.W.Kaye, Malleson, Trevelyan Lawrence and Holmes have pointed it as 'a mutiny' confined to the army that did not command the support of the people at large. A similar view was held by many contemporary Indians like Munshi Jiwan Lal, Moinuddin (both eyewitnesses at Delhi), Durgadas Bandyopadhaya (eyewitness at Bareilly), and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (*Sadr Amin* at Bijnor in 1857) among many others. Others described it as a 'religious war against the Christians' or 'a racial struggle for supremacy between the black and the white'. Still others described it 'a struggle between orientalist and occidental civilization and culture'. Some Indian nationalists have called it a well-planned national struggle and as 'the first war of India's independence'.

Western scholars' interpretations - tagging the revolt of 1857 as mutiny are a bit outcome of the British imperial bias. A recent British historian, Judith M. Brown has admitted the existence and persistence of this bias. She writes, 'At the time many British people preferred to see the events largely as a military mutiny—understandably as any wider interpretation would have cast doubts on the nature of their raj - 'a mutiny complex' does seem to have become part on the British picture of India'.¹ Prof. F.G. Hutchins, a U.S.A. based historian expresses a similar opinion when he writes, 'The uprising of 1857 was termed a mutiny by the British because they wished to emphasize its treasonous nature and in addition to convey the impression that it was confined to the Indian troops of the British Army. It is

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1. Judith M. Brown, *Modern India*, Oxford University Press, 1994, p.86.

clear, however, from recent scholarly research that while it began as a military mutiny, the uprising quickly assumed the character of a popular rebellion'.² What started merely as a sepoy mutiny soon engulfed the peasantry and other civilian population over wide areas in northern India. The upsurge was so wide spread that some of the contemporary observers called it a 'national revolt' or the Indian war of independence.³ The hatred of the people for the *Feringhee* was so intense and bitter that one observer, W.H. Russell, was forced to write:

In no instance is a friendly glance directed to the white man's carriage... Oh! That language of the eye! Who can doubt! Who can misinterpret it? It is by it alone that I have learnt our race is not even feared at times by many and that by all it is disliked.⁴

Prof. Stanley Wolpert, an American historian strikes a slightly different stance and agrees with R.C. Majumdar⁵ when he writes about the revolt of 1857, 'It was for more than a mutiny... yet much less than a first war of independence'. There is broad consensus among historians that in the middle of the 19th century the conception of nationality - if nationalism is taken in the modern sense was in embryo. S.N. Sen⁶ remarks that India in 1857 was 'a geographical expression' and the Bengalis, the Punjabis, the Hindustanis, the Maharashtrians and the people in the south did not realize that they belong to the same nation.

Recent studies in regional basis have thrown very interesting sidelights on the participation of the rural people, princely states and sepoys (stationed in the area that was not under effective or direct control of the Britishers) during the revolt of 1857. Jawaharlal Nehru also refers to the rural base of the revolt and point out that even the feudal chiefs were unorganized and had no constructive ideal or community of interests.⁷ S.B.

2. F.G. Hutchins, *The Illusion of Permanence*, Princeton University Press, 1967, p.79.
3. V.D. Savarkar, *The Indian war of Independence*, Calcutta, 1930 (and Bombay 1947). Banned originally by the British government as seditious. Patriotism emphasized perhaps at the expense of scholarship.
4. William Howard Russell, *My Indian Mutiny Diary*, London, Casselle Company, 1957. Russell was the 'The Times' correspondent. His diary is concerned with the events of 1858 not 1857, i.e. the military campaign in suppression of the revolt rather than the mutiny itself.
5. He argues against regarding the rebellion as a national war of independence, and put the sepoys mutiny down to fear of loss of caste and religion. He says there was no plot and points out the lack of a great leader. His conclusion about 1857 uprising may be summarized in his own words. 'To regard the outbreak of 1857 simply as a mutiny of sepoys is probably as great an error as to look upon it as a national war of independence'. R.C. Majumdar, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*, Calcutta, 1957.
6. S.N. Sen, 1857, Delhi, 1958. Sen was commissioned by the Government of India to write the 'official' history of the mutiny/rebellion. He has made an exhaustive study of all available records, official as well as non-official and expresses the view that the struggle cannot be characterized as a great national uprising.
7. Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Calcutta, 1946, p.327.

Chaudhuri⁸ and Eric Stokes⁹ both maintained that major violence in rural areas came from traditionally superior class communities (princely rulers) for whom British rule had meant loss of political influence and economic deprivation.

After the defeat of Sikhs in Anglo-Sikh war, British merged the states of Kangra, Nurpur, Jaswan, Guler, Siba, Datarpur, Kotala, Banghal, Kullu and Lahaul-Spiti¹⁰ and put the same under the single command of Deputy Commissioner.¹¹ Across the Sutlej the states of Mandi, Suket, Kulehar, Bilaspur and Chamba, the Superintendent Cis-Sutlej state was appointed for managing and controlling their affairs. All these princely states were under the control of Punjab state and English officers. Special political department was opened to look after the affairs of these princely states. The officers of this department like Political Residents, Agents, and Superintendents used to look after these states and were accountable to Governor-General. The rest of the Shimla hill states Jutogh, Subathu, Kasauli, Dagshai, Kotgarh, Kotkhai, Bahrauli, Sanawar and Shimla town areas were merged to form district Shimla and this was put under the control of Deputy Commissioner Shimla.¹² It can safely be said that nearly more than half of Himachal Pradesh area was under the control of East India Company in 1849 A.D.¹³

To understand the real position of Himachal Pradesh area at this crisis, its strength and its weakness, it will be necessary to take at the outset

8. Shashi Bhushan Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies, 1857-58*, Calcutta 1957. Chaudhuri's recent studies in Indian agrarian society have thrown interesting sidelights on the rural participation in the revolt of 1857. He also emphasizes the widespread nature of the disturbance.
9. Eric Stokes, *The Peasant and the Raj: Studies in Agrarian Society and Peasant Rebellion in Colonial India*, Cambridge, 1978; Eric Stokes, *The Peasant Armed: The Indian Revolt of 1857*, Oxford, 1986. Stokes believes that in rural area the revolt of 1857 was essentially elitist in character.
10. Rulers of these states were given small pension and *jagirs*.
11. Kangra was made a district under the British. Its administration was put under the control of Deputy Commissioner of Kangra. Following officers held charge of district Kangra since annexation: Edward Lake, annexation to January 1847; Mr. G.C. Barnes, February 1847 to January 1851; Mr. E.C. Bayley, February 1852 to January 1853; Mr. T.D. Forsyth, February 1853 to January 1854; Mr. F.H. Cooper, February 1854 to January 1855; Major R. Lake, February 1855 to January 1856; Mr. R. Jenkins, February 1856 to 9th January 1857; Major R. Taylor, April 1857 to 28th August 1860. *Kangra District Gazetteer, 1924-25*, p.118.
12. Following officers held charge of District Shimla since annexation: Lieutenant R. Ross, 1815 to 18th January 1822; Captain C.P. Kennedy, 19th January 1822 to 1st November 1835; Captain J.K. McCausland, 2nd November 1835 to 27th April 1836; Colonel H.T. Tapp, 28th April 1836 to 1st July 1841; J.C. Erskine, 1st July 1841 to 2nd May 1842; H. Lushington Esquire, 2nd May 1842 to 27th October 1842; J.C. Erskine, 28th October 1842 to 31st October 1847; W. Edward Esquire, 1st November 1847 to 25th October 1852; W.M. Hay, 26th October 1852 to 31st March 1855; C.B. Denison Esquire, April to December 1855; W.M. Hay, December 1855 to January 1859. *Gazetteer of Shimla District, 1904*, p.17.
13. For detail of princely states in Himachal Pradesh see *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Punjab*, Vol. II, pp. 370-80.

a brief survey of the distribution of troops, European and native, over this province and nearby areas.

At Ambala,	H.M. 9th Lancers, 2 troops of horse-artillery, with the 4th (Native) Light Cavalry, and 5th and 60th regiments Native Infantry.
At Kasauli,	H.M. 75th Regiments.
At Dagshai,	the Hon. Company's 1st Bengal Fusiliers.
At Subathu,	the Hon. Company's 2nd Bengal Fusiliers.
At Jutogh,	the Nasiri Battalion of Gurkhas.
At Firozepur,	H.M. 61st Regiment, and 2nd Companies of foot artillery, with the 10th (Native) Light Cavalry, and the 45th and 57th Regiments Native Infantry.
At Phillour,	the 3rd Regiment Native Infantry.
At Jallandhar,	H.M. 8th (King's), 1 Troop and 1 Company of artillery, with the 6th (Native) Light Cavalry, and the 36th and 61st Regiments Native Infantry.
At Hoshiarpur,	the 9th (Native) Light Cavalry, and 33rd Regiment Native Infantry.
At Nurpur and Kangra,	the 4th Native Infantry in wings, and a (Native) troops of horse-artillery.
At Amritsar,	1 company of foot-artillery in the fort of Gobindgarh, and the 59th Native Infantry in cantonments.
At Gurdaspur,	the 2nd (Native) Irregular Cavalry.

Ever since the advent of the British, the people of the Himachal Pradesh had been harbouring a great deal of resentment against their rule for the interference of British in their religious, economic and political exploitations. Captain Brig., the Superintendent of the hill-roads, Shimla, also said that the entire hill-population was seething with the feeling of revolt on the eve of the outbreak of the uprising in 1857. He also received warning from these people that '*no ferangee* would remain alive to the north of Ambala'.¹⁴ Although that time, the Himachal Pradesh population was described as simple-minded, orderly people, truthful in character and submissive to authority so that they scarcely required to be ruled.¹⁵ The East Indian Company's policy of effective control and gradual extinction of the Indian native states had also created a spirit of uneasiness and suspicious throughout the area of Himachal Pradesh. In Himachal Pradesh, major disturbance during revolt of 1857 came from the disappointed princely

14. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt. 1, p. 139.

15. W.W. Hunter, *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XII, Calcutta, 1887, p. 493.

rulers and the sepoys,¹⁶ the mass of the population appear to have played very little part in 1857 uprising or at most timely followed at the behest of its local leadership.

On Sunday evening 10 May 1857, 3rd Indian Regiments stationed at Meerut, shot their officers, broke open the goal and set off with their arms along the road to Delhi. No attempt was made to stop them by General Hewitt, who commanded the station, though under him were two British regiments and some artillery. Twenty-four hours later Bahadur Shah, the titular king of Delhi, was proclaimed Emperor of Hindustan and over five thousand armed men held Delhi. This way Indian mutiny had begun. Very soon, the rebellion spread throughout northern and central India at Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur, Bareilly, Banaras, Jhansi, Bihar, Punjab, Ambala, Shimla, Kangra and other places. The revolt of 1857 did take place in Himachal Pradesh, though not to that extent as at other places in Hindustan. To check the growing resentment and dissatisfaction brewing among the Himachalis, the British authorities took a serious view of the whole matter. They at once took defensive or precautionary measures to meet any dangerous situation. Consequently, when the outbreak of the uprising took place in May 1857, they were found ready to face the challenge. At the very outset, they issued a proclamation that civilians, *faqirs*, *gosains*, etc., were 'not to wonder about the country as were liable to be apprehended and be treated roughly as suspected person (connected with rebels)'.¹⁷ The roads ferries and *nakas* (hill passes) were heavily guarded. Travelling passes were issued to the ordinary travellers. The mosques, temples, *takkias*, etc., the usual resting places of the *sadhus* and *faqirs* were watched in the large towns and all the new arrivals were brought before the Deputy Commissioner of the district concerned. At the same time the *dak* of the people were censored and examined in the post offices and all the letters of doubtful or mischievous tendency received for the regiments or inhabitants of the districts were suppressed.

The news of Meerut outbreak reached Shimla in same day and caused great excitement. The rather smooth life in Shimla was disrupted during 1857.¹⁸ The tales of mutiny sent shivers up the spines of the Europeans in Shimla and other parts of Himachal Pradesh.

16. The Cantonments in Himachal region; Shimla, Kasauli, Dagshai, Subathu, Jutogh, Kangra and Nurpur being situated on the cool Himalayan spurs were inhabited by the British regiments, only a few Indian troops were kept there for duties. There was a full regiment the *Nasiri* battalion at Jutogh and a troop each at Kasauli, Kangra and Nurpur.

17. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt.1, pp.209-11,213.

18. For a contemporary account of the mutiny time in Shimla, reference may be made to Frederick Henry Cooper, *Crisis in the Punjab from 10th May Until the Fall of Delhi*, Lahore, 1858. Cooper was a Deputy Commissioner of the Punjab, based at Amritsar and although a civilian, was responsible for the 'extermination' of the disarmed 26th BNI at Ujnalla, in particularly inhumane and unpleasant circumstances, for which he was praised and supported by his superiors but roundly condemned by many in the house of commons when the news reached London. He wrote this book, to vindicate his conduct that he considered 'prompt, spirited and thorough'.

Commander-in-Chief General George Anson was at Shimla when he got the telegram announcing that Delhi had become free. When he was thinking what he was to do, he got Lord Canning's order to take Delhi at first. Sir John Lawrance, Chief Commissioner of Punjab, also sent urgent message to Anson to capture Delhi and ordered to bring regiments of Jutogh, Subathu, Dagshai and Kasauli down to Ambala. Only just, had Anson left the height of Shimla and arrived at the army headquarters at Ambala, there was a tremendous uproar at Shimla.¹⁹ The Gurkhas of the Nasiri battalion at Jutogh refused to move for Phillaur.²⁰ At Shimla there were disgraceful scene when an unfounded rumour spread abroad that a battalion of Gurkhas²¹ had mutinied and were about to rob and murder the *ferangees*.²² Hastily orders were issued for all the European women and children to assemble first at the Church and subsequently at the Shimla Bank (now Grand Hotel), in case a necessity arouse to seek a place of refuge. Great was the confusion which ensued, on the signal agreed upon (the firing of two guns) being given. They all, about four hundred assembled at the Shimla Bank.²³ After some time the rumour came that some of Gurkhas were coming to 'loot' Shimla, this made matter worse and immediately not only was the bank deserted,²⁴ as it was supposed that it would be first place the mutineers would try to seize, some went off by by-paths, avoiding the main road, to Kasauli, Dagshai and Subathu to seek protection in the European barracks, some sought shelter into the territories of hill Chiefs of the neighbourhood, others rushed into the interior of the hills, filling the *dak* bungalows on the road - all appeared to be bereft for the time of their

19. On 14 May, he reached Ambala. General Anson the personally brave and energetic, but totally inexperienced Commander-in-Chief. P.J.O. Taylor, *What Really Happened During the Mutiny*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 22. A day-by-day account of the major events of 1857-1859 in India. See also V.D. Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence*, Calcutta, 1930, pp. 130-31.

20. Anson, Commander-in-Chief ordered the Nasiri battalion to march from Jutogh to Phillaur to escort siege train from Phillaur to Delhi. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, Pt. 1, p. 127.

21. For detail about the outbreak of mutiny at Jutogh and Kasauli see *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, Part 1, pp. 57-64; *Military Consultation*, No. 260, June 19, 1857; *Foreign Secret Consultation*, Nos. 4-5, July 3, 1857.

22. Christopher Hibbet, *The Great Mutiny: India 1857*, London, Penguin Books, 1978, p. 127. A recent and very readable account of the great rebellion, told from the particular viewpoint of those Europeans who suffered during the struggle.

23. T. Rice Holmes, *History of the Indian Mutiny*, London, 1904, p. 116. A 'heavy weight' English historian of the rebellion whose work has the merit of being distanced from forty years in time from the events he described, which makes for an objective and historian's re-appraisal of the rebellion. The standard work, J.C. Brown, *Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1999, pp. 196-202; H. Dundas Robertson, *District Duties during the revolt in the North-Western Provinces*, London, 1859, pp. 81-82; Moinuddin Hasan, *Gadar-1857*, Delhi, 1999, p. 80.

24. In the words of Captain Brigg. 'Shimla had the appearance of a city of the dead'. In *Punjab Government Report*, Vol. VIII, Pt. 1, p. 135.

senses.²⁵ The scene that followed was so ludicrous, seeing the utter want of adequate cause of alarm and shed so little glory on the courage of those in authority and of the inhabitants, Europeans as well as the natives, that the less written on the subject the better. Major General Penny was quite incapable of maintaining order and was evidently in the greatest possible fright himself.²⁶

The account left by G.W.De Rhe Phillips, who was residing in Shimla, when the news reached the town notes that there was marked panic among the European residents. But he has written that not everything was in disorder. He has stated that the then Deputy Commissioner, Lord William Hay who left for Jutogh, attempted to 'reason' with the Gurkha soldiers stationed there. Meanwhile, in consequences of positive intelligence reaching the station that the Gurkhas had broken out into mutiny and were coming up into loot the place, a considerable number of citizens, in accordance with arrangements made the day before, assembled at the bank under the command of Major General Nicholas Penny, for the purpose of making a stand, and here they remained until Lord William Hay came back from Jutogh late at night and reported that the troops had returned to duty and advised those at the bank to proceed to their house.²⁷

The special correspondent of *'The Times'* William Howard Russell who visited Shimla in the following year has written that the European in Shimla seemed to be facing a real danger as the troops at Jutogh who 'were in a state little removal from open mutiny'. He has written, obviously, on the accounts he received during his visit, that soldiers looted the treasury at the neighbouring station and it was providential that the soldiers at Jutogh were 'restrained' from revolt. Depicting the scene at that time in Shimla, he has written that:

Shimla was full of women, and men more timid than the women were and many bad characters were in bazaar ready for plunder and outrage if the troops broke out. A revolt on the very border of Punjab might have roused the Sikhs beyond Lawrance control and then indeed history would have had to philosophize over the fall of our empire in India'.²⁸

25. Even the army officers fled away. Among those who sought shelter at Keonthal state were Major General Penny, Lt. Colonels Keithyoung, Greathed, Thos Quin, Colyear, and seven other officers. Colonel Keithyoung, *Delhi, 1857*, London, 1902, p. 323; The most comprehensive and detailed account of the siege assault and capture of Delhi, from the diary and correspondence of Colonel Keithyoung, presented by General Sir Henry Wylie Norman. See also, *Punjab Government Report*, VIII, pt.1, p. 65.
26. General Penny allowed many to get intoxicated, and, if the Gurkhas had chosen to come [which they had no intention of doing], they could easily have murdered us all. It was a most disgraceful scene and made one ashamed of one's compatriots. Cited in Christopher Hibbert, *The Great Mutiny: India 1857*, p. 128.
27. George William De Rhe Phillips, *List of Inscription on Tomb and Monuments in the Punjab, N.W.F. Province, Kashmir, Afghanistan*, cited in Vipin Pubby, *Simla Then and Now*, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 30-31.
28. William Howard Russell, *My Indian Mutiny Diary*, pp. 186-190.

Nor was Shimla the only place affected by the presence of the Gurkhas of the Nasiri battalion. A small guard of them was at Kasauli over the civil treasury and when they found the station wholly in their hands on the withdrawal of all except one company of H.M. 75th,²⁹ and heard of the Shimla doings, they seized the opportunity, forced the treasure chest, helped themselves to their arrears of pay, and marched off for Jutogh.³⁰ The consternation of the few remaining British residents of the station chiefly women and children was great.³¹ Lord William Hay, Deputy Commissioner suggested that all should hasten upto Shimla, but Mr. J. Taylor, the Assistant Commissioner in charge, seeing how fatal such a step would be on the already disturbed Nasir battalion at Jutogh, remonstrated, and the danger passed off.³²

The detachment, however, under Subedar Bhim Singh on their way upto Shimla, met the baggage of General Anson (at Haripur) being carried down to Ambala, and, by way of giving vent to their hatred, burnt or destroyed nearly the whole of it. At Sayari they stopped and robbed a few English men and women, who were going to plains and intercepted and destroyed bag containing letters.³³

Captain David Briggs, an officer who had been long employed in that neighbourhood on the great Tibet-Hindustan road, and thus gained considerable acquaintance and influence with the Gurkhas, was sent back by General Anson from Kasauli to endeavour to bring the men to reason, and empowered to grant full pardon provided the corps would march, and he succeeded. The regiments was induced to appoint representatives to confer on their imagined wrongs, their principal demands were acceded to, their pay arrears paid up, and a general amnesty granted,³⁴ under shelter of which even some of the Kasauli guards were unable to escape punishment. They were sent to Ambala and were severely dealt with.³⁵

At Shimla quiet was restored after a few days, and families began to return. Despite the dire rumour of fires, plundering and massacre one officer declared he had seen his own house blazing—to find that not a particle of furniture had been injured - ladies jewellery, even to their silver thimbles on

29. Indian troops' number was very low than the Europeans at Kasauli. Still they revolted on 16 May 1857.

30. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol.VIII, pt.1, pp. 66-67.

31. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol.VIII, pt.1, p. 69.

32. *Military Consultation*, No.260, June 19,1857; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.I, p.201. Brown narrated account of the measures by which the Punjab and the area of Himachal Pradesh was 'saved' for government. Very one-sided (British) but readable none the less. Originally published in instalments in Blackwoods Magazine. Has some original material as it is based on the author's own journal, and, because it is contemporaneous, may be regarded as a primary source.

33. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt.1, pp. 183-85.

34. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt.1, pp. 62-64 and 135; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.I, pp. 201-2; *Gazetteer of Shimla 1904*, p. 16.

35. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos.4-5, July 3,1857.

their work-tables, papers, drafts, etc., left on office desk all untouched.³⁶ Yet, with returning quiet, Shimla had not restored confidence. For month it continued in a chronic state of panic. Moreover, no wise precautions were taken, contingents indeed were called in from the surrounding chiefs but were absorbed in guards over the official buildings and private residence of the superintendent of the hill states.³⁷

There was also a widespread discontentment among the people in Nalagarh area. The British had kept their arms and ammunition in Malaun (Nalagarh fort). On 16 May 1857, Captain Brigg. Deputed his assistant to bring some arms and ammunition from the Malaun fort. When the soldiers carrying arms were leaving the fort, the rebels with the help of local *zamindars* attacked them. They snatched away the ammunition, arms, and fled away. Ultimately, to suppress the revolt and control the situation, the Commissioner of Trans-Sutlej, Edward Johan Lake requisitioned some army from the Mandi state and dispatched it toward Nalagarh.³⁸

Another notable happening at Nalagarh occurred on 10 June 1857, when 600 patriots from Jalandhar joined local forces, attacked, and looted the treasury of Nalagarh. Assistance was requisitioned from the *Rana* of Baghal who provided 150 armed troops, Mandi State provided 60 troops, *Raja* of Bilaspur (Kahlur) sent 250 troops and Nalagarh state also kept 100 troops under Captain Brigg. for safety of Nalagarh. On 20 June 1857, the Nalagarh revolt could ultimately be brought under control.³⁹

The open disobedience of the order of Commander-in-Chief, General Anson by the Gurkha Army at Nahan town was the major cause of revolt on 1 May 1857. The Gurkhas refused to march toward Ambala. There was not much hope of help from the ruler of Sirmour, Raja Shamsher Prakash, who was just 11 years old. Kunwar Surjan Singh and Bir Singh were appointed by British to assist him. They succeeded in controlling the general discontentment to some extent. The princely Government of Sirmour was successful in controlling the revolt.⁴⁰ Sirmour state rendered valuable service to British in 1857 revolt. By the order of Deputy Commissioner Shimla, William Hay, 60 Sirmouri *Sainiks* were sent to Shimla by ruler of state who was deputed to main Bazar Shimla.

On the termination of the Anglo-Sikh war, the hill tracts between the Sutlej and Bias, under the treaty of 9 March 1846, ceded to the British government, and Kangra Fort thus came directly under British control. However, the transfer was not carried out without difficulty. Relying on its ancient prestige, the Sikh Commandant of the fort refused to yield up his

36. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt.1, p.135; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.I, p. 202.

37. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VII, pt.1, p. 299.

38. *Gazetteer of Shimla Hill States 1910*, Nalagarh, pp.7-8.

39. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt.1, p.139; Vol. VII, pt.1, p. 299.

40. *Gazetteer of the Sirmour State 1934*, p. 19.

trust and garrison of fort Kotla followed his example.⁴¹ When all means of persuasion had failed, a British force with a battery, was sent up from Ludhiana by way of the Goznala to compel the surrender, and at the end of two months the commandant of fort Kangra agreed to evacuate on condition of a free and honourable passage for himself and his men.⁴² After the surrender of the fort, a native infantry regiment was sent to garrison it and a detachment of eighty men, under a European officer, was posted at Kotla. A full corps of the line was also stationed at the fort of Nurpur, and order was received to raise a local regiment from the military population of the hills. For civil management, the whole of the hill tract between the Sutlej and Ravi (excepting the Jaswan valley) was constituted a separate district, of which Lieutenant Lake, Assistant Commissioner, was placed in charge.⁴³

The peculiarities of this district were its mountainous nature, the number of rivers and streams that traverse it, and the number of petty chieftains and hill forts now in ruins, which were dispersed over its area, the first two causes combining to make communication difficult and uncertain, and the last rendering it imperative, especially in time of anxiety like 1857 crisis, that the district officer should kept well informed of every event occurring anywhere. Very much of its tranquility depended on the preservation of the two strong fortresses of Kangra and Nurpur. 'He who hold Kangra fort holds the hills', say the country people.

The fort Kangra was at this time held by a wing of the 4th Native Infantry under Major Patterson.⁴⁴ Major Taylor, the Deputy Commissioner, was compelled to entertain a very large number of men to watch the ferries and the *nakahs* or hill passes, and his anxiety was further increased by the manifestation in instance of an uneasy feeling among the hill chiefs.⁴⁵

Major Lake, the Commissioner of the trans-Sutlej states was marching in the neighbourhood when the tidings of the Meerut and Delhi disasters reached him on 15 May. He at once wrote to Captain Younghusband, commanding the 2nd battalion of Punjab police (better known by the soubriquet of 'Shere dils') to arrange for throwing a small body of them into the fort. He himself rode over with Major Reynell Taylor, the Deputy Commissioner of Kangra apparently to make a casual call on some of the officers in the fort, but after-events showed that visit had really a far deeper object, the secret of which was only disclosed to Major

41. The others depossessed chiefs of Kangra area also did not yield a willing allegiance to British government. G.C. Barnes, *Settlement Report of the Kangra District*, Lahore, 1889, pp.13-14.

42. *Kangra District Gazetteer*, 1924, p.111; J. Hutchison and J. Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, Vol.I, p.196.

43. For other officers who held the charge of this District see *Kangra District Gazetteer*, pp.118-121.

44. The 4th N.I. were regarded with fear; they had once mutinied already about Sindi (Sindh) allowance.

45. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt. 1, pp. 209-11, 213.

Patterson.⁴⁶

By day light on the following morning the stillness of the Kangra fort was suddenly broken by the Joyous notes of "*The British Grenadiers*", played by the band of the "*Sherdils*", who, with their commandant at their head, were marching in at the gate. They quietly took up their quarters in the citadel, the bulk of the treasure was at the same time sent into the citadel and the remainder lodged in the newly fortified police station which commands the sepoy lines in the fort and the city of Kangra outside, as well as the road to Hoshiarpur, and at once relieved the magazine guards, the other guards being divided between them and the 4th Native Infantry.⁴⁷ The men of the 4th Native Infantry had been taken wholly by surprise. They declared that their 'heart were small', especially at having the magazine guard taken away from them. Their conduct, however, was throughout most orderly, and apparently loyal. Half a company of native artillery were also in the fort, but they were got out of the way a few days after, a summons coming from Lahore for them to proceed to Phillaur, on the plea that they would be required to accompany the siege-train.⁴⁸

Kangra was occupied by a wing of the 4th Native Infantry Regiment, and a detachment of the *Sherdils*. Although British authorities anticipated some trouble from them, they quietly surrender their arms on 11 July, when asked to do so by Major Taylor, the Deputy Commissioner of Kangra and Col. Younghusband, their commanding officer.⁴⁹ On same night, Major Taylor with a part of same body and some Sikh cavalry marched to Nurpur, to disarm the right wing of the same regiment stationed at that place. The men however, voluntarily surrendered their arms to their commanding officer, Major Wilkie, at his simple request, before Major Taylor could arrive there. Sepoys even carried their arms to his bungalow themselves on the other side of the town through the bazaar.⁵⁰ John Lawrance and the higher authorities praised their behaviour.⁵¹ Thus first tidings, of danger, the fort of Kangra was safe.

Nor was the rest of the district neglected. At the town of Dharamsala, a place of considerable sanctity, due precautions were taken by

46. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. I, p.130.

47. A few days after, on the 18th, a brass 24-pounder howitzer that chanced to be in the magazine and a good supply of ammunition, were brought up into the citadel to be ready in case of need. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.I, p.131.

48. They went with it as far as Ambala, where they were detained as not being more trustworthy than their brethren, and their 9 pponder guns made over to Captain Murray.

49. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol.VIII, pt.1, pp.211-213; J.C.Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.II, pp.81-82. The sepoys said, "their arms were the property of the government and they were quite ready to give them up at the request of their officers and they only regretted that any show of force had been made".

50. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol.VII, pt.1, p.213; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.II, p.82.

51. *Punjab Government Records* Vol.VIII, pt.1, pp.246-265; Cooper, *The Crisis in the Punjab*, p.153.

Major Reynell Taylor, the *Kotwallee* (or native police station) was enclosed with gates and the walls loopholed, and made defensible in the events of attack.⁵² The post office was brought under a strict surveillance, every native letter was opened, and, if found at all seditious or even suspicious in tone, never reached its destination, the ferries and passes guarded, and all vagrants seized and brought before the magistrates for examination.⁵³ Proclamations also were issued warning the inhabitants that vagrancy would not be tolerated, that their pilgrim zeal must be for a time in abeyance, and every mosque and temple, and shrine with which this district bounds, had its guards, in order to seize any suspected visitors.⁵⁴ By the admirable arrangements, so promptly and vigorously enforced by Major Lake and Major Taylor, the atmosphere of Kangra was kept clear.

By the treaty of 9 March 1846, after the first Anglo-Sikh war, the hill country between the Sutlej and the Indus was ceded to the British government, Kullu being within the ceded territory and the portion between the Sutlej and the Ravi, including Lahaul, finally remained British territory, the rest being sold to Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu. Thakur Singh was confirmed sovereign of *waziri-* Rupi area,⁵⁵ the remainder of the state, including Lahaul, being placed in charge of Assistant Commissioner as a portion of newly formed district of Kangra. At the same, Spiti was disjoined from Ladakh and annexed to Kullu. On his death in 1852 his son Jodhbir Singh, who was illegitimate, succeeded Thakur Singh, his title was changed to Rai, and British withdrew all political power from him. Before Thakur Singh, the Ajit Singh's claim of *Raja* for Waziri Rupi was challenged by his uncle Kishan Singh, who at his death left a posthumous son, Pratap Singh.⁵⁶

In his youth, he took to the profession of arms, held a high rank in the military service of a Sikh Chief, Sardar Lehna Singh, and fought against the British in the first Sikh campaign of 1845-46. He was supposed to have been killed in the battle of Aliwal. On such a belief, a small pension and some land were settled on his widow with the title of *Rani*.⁵⁷

In 1855, after a lapse of ten years, there appeared in the village of

52. See for more detail about Dharamsala and role of Major Raynell Taylor during mutiny 1857-58 in E. Gambier Parry, *Reynell Taylor: A Biography*, London, Kegan Paul Trench, 1888.

53. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. I, p. 132.

54. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt. 1, pp. 209-11, 213; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. I, p. 132.

55. The State included the upper Bias valley, from the Rohtang pass to Bajaura (ancient time Kullu boundary was at Manglor) with Lahaul and a portion of the Sutlej valley was divided into seven waziris or provinces. 1. Waziri Parol, 2. Waziri Rupi, 3. Waziri Saroj, 4. Waziri Lag-Maharaja, 5. Waziri Lag-Sari, 6. Waziri Bangahal, 7. Waziri Lahal.

56. *Punjab Government Records* Vol. VIII, pt. 1, pp. 210-11; J. Hutchison & J. Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, Vol. II, p. 473; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, pp. 305-06.

57. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, Nos. 33-36, Sept. 25, 1857; *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt. 1, pp. 218-19; J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, p. 306.

Tirmali near Kullu, a *faqir*, declaring himself to be the long missing Pratap Singh, and claiming his *jagir*. However, the British government did not consider his demand.⁵⁸ Pratap Singh took up his abode in Sheoraj, a village in the proximity of Kullu. He gathered around him a small retinue, and lived with princely splendour. His forceful personality soon made him popular and won unofficial recognition of his right to rule over the Kullu *parganas*. Several villagers refused to pay revenue to *Raja* Jodhbir Singh and instead paid to Pratap Singh. On two occasions Pratap Singh, lead popular demonstrations in his favour. The Deputy Commissioner of Kangra took exception of such attempts on his part and "warned against making any public appeal of this nature."⁵⁹ He was further warned that he would be only tolerated on condition if he lived peaceably.⁶⁰ A strict watch was posed on him.⁶¹

In order to judge the conduct the Pratap Singh how he would pursue during the fateful days of the crisis of 1857, Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Kangra put a question to him as to how many men he could furnish, if occasion required. Pratap Singh did not give any reply of this query, and on the contrary, raised the standard of revolt against the British.⁶² He set up his independent *raj* of Kullu and made Teerah, a considerable town near it, as his headquarters. Assuming the title of *Raja* and appointing a person named Surat Ram, whose father had been an old *wazir* of Kullu *raj*, his Prime Minister. He sent emissaries to all the headmen of villages in the Kangra district, he reminded them of the hereditary claims of his family to their loyalty, bade them to come along with their followers and side with him against the British authorities, who were all out to destroy their religion. Besides that, he got the news circulated far and wide that the British rule was at an end and all the Europeans at the large stations in India had been massacred.⁶³

The *Thanedar* of Teerah was entirely in Pratap Singh's hands. Consequently, he did not send any report against him to the district authorities. Hay, the Deputy Commissioner was suspicious of his activities for quite a long time before, he transferred this *Thanedar* to Shahpur and placed a trusted Mohammedan *Thanedar* in his place at Teerah. Since then (June 1857), the district authorities received excellent intelligence of Raja Pratap Singh's movements.⁶⁴ A lot of seditious correspondence was

58. *Ibid.*, The Wife of Pratap Singh in first instance could not identify him, but at length by the persuasion of her brother Bir Singh, she consented to acknowledge this man as her long-lost husband.

59. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, p. 305.

60. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 33-36, Sept. 25, 1857.

61. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, p. 307.

62. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, p. 307.

63. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt. 1, pp. 218-19.

64. *Foreign Secret Consultation*, Nos. 33-36, Sept. 25, 1857.

intercepted, oral and written evidence was collected from various sources, and it became perfectly clear to the authorities that Pratap Singh kindled the flames of sedition throughout the region. He had also drawn within his influence several of the neighbouring chiefs, and the whole district was in danger, a danger, which was only averted by the timely discovery of the whole plot.⁶⁵

With great caution and tact, Pratap Singh was arrested along with his brother-in-law Bir Singh, while he was unvigilantly moving in vicinity of Sultanpur. He was immediately sent off to Kangra where he was tried by a Commission, found guilty and received the extremist penalty of the Act XVI of 1857 - death by being hanged. His brother-in-law Bir Singh also met the same fate, while other chief followers got imprisonment according to their degree of guilt.⁶⁶

The *jagir* and property of Rani Ranpattu wife of Pratap Singh were confiscated. A small pension, just sufficient to keep her infant son safe from starving, was given to her. Besides that, she was removed from Kullu and the house in which Pratap Singh lived was raised to the ground so that its ruins might remain as a monument of his unsuccessful attempt at rebellion.

During the revolt of 1857, local people of Chamba state could not contribute much in the revolt of 1857. During this period Chamba state was ruled by Shri Singh, who extended all sorts of help to the British in crashing down the uprising.⁶⁷ On 16th May 1857, on the demand of John Lawrance (Chief Commissioner of Punjab and British Political Agent), he sent troops to Dalhousie under Mian Avtar Singh and also had a careful watch kept along the frontier for any mutineers who might enter state territory, many of whom were apprehended and made over to the British authorities.⁶⁸ On 8 June 1857, when 36th Native Infantry and 61 Native Infantry of Indian regiment revolted at Jallandhar and pose a threat to Europeans settled in Dalhousie town, numerous women and children took refuge at the residence of Raja Shri Singh of Chamba, who efficiently protected them.⁶⁹

On 9 July 1857, 36 Native Infantry and cavalry again revolted at Jallandhar. There was again apprehension that rebels might enter in Chamba

65. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VII, pt.1, pp.335-39.

66. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol.II, pp.307-08; *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos.33-36, 25th Sept.1857, Sardul got rigorous imprisonment for 14 years, while Kashe got for 12 years, Toola for 12 years, Mandas for 10 years, Surat Ram for 8 years, Kesha Ram for 4 years and Dev Dutt for 3 years. Many other whose guilt could not be proved were acquitted after witnessing the execution.

67. J. Hutchison & J.Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, Vol.I, p.328. A sanad dated 6 April 1848 was granted to Raja Shri Singh, Conferring the territory of Chamba upon him.

68. C.U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Calcutta, 1892, Vol.II, No.CXXIX, XVIII; *Chamba District Gazetteer*, p. 149.

69. *Punjab Government Records*, Vol. VIII, pt.1, p. 146.

state, due precautions were taken by Deputy Commissioner Major Reynell Taylor, and some of 300 troops were sent for his help by Shri Singh. Every ferry on the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi guarded by police and local levies, the boats were all drow up high and dry, and planks taken out of their bottoms, to render them useless.⁷⁰ Despite all these measures, some of the mutineers entered in Chamba and tried to create disturbance, but with the help of Shri Singh, mutineers who entered in Chamba state from Sialkot, Jhelum and Jalandhar were handed over to the British authorities. At least 60 were imprisoned and rest were turned out of district.⁷¹

On 9 March 1846, a treaty was concluded between the British government and the Sikh Darbar whereby, among the other provisions, the whole of the doab, between the Sutlej and Bias, was ceded in perpetuity to British government. Mandi and Suket being within the ceded territory came directly under British control, and placed under in charge of the Commissioner of Jalandhar, and Political Agent of the hill states. Mr. Barnes the first Deputy Commissioner of Kangra (Feb. 1847 to Jan. 1851) settled the boundaries between Mandi, Suket and Kangra.⁷²

During 1857 the *Raja* of Mandi, Bajaj Sen was minor in age and East India company appointed their loyal supporter *Wazir* Gosaon as Regent. Almost entire control of the administration, judicial and financial was given to *Wazir* Gosaon. *Wazir* Gosaon is said to have been even more powerful than the *Raja*. *Wazir* Gosaon name is still remembered in the state. It was chiefly through his agency that British could able to maintain proper law and order within the state during 1857 uprising. Local rebels could not get much support from ruler classes, *zamindars* and police due to strict control of *Wazir* Gosaon. He rendered very valuable service to British during mutiny of 1857, he sent 125 gunners on the demand of British officers to suppress the rebels in Una-Hoshiarpur area. On the demand of Commissioner Trans-Sutlej, Edward John Lake (28 May 1857) Gosaon provided 60 infantry troops to British for safety of Nalagarh in 1857. In addition to it, *Wazir* Gosaon also provided 50 troops for British to suppress the rebellion in Jalandhar. Mandi state also helped the British by giving aid of 1,25,000 rupees in mutiny time, *Wazir* Gosaon also contributed 15,000 rupees from his personal account.

In October 1846 a *sanad* was granted to Ugar Sen by the British, confirming him in his possessions and defining his right and obligations by the British.⁷³ By virtue of the *sanad*, the suzerainty of Suket state was finally transferred from the Sikhs to the British government and the tribute

70. J.C. Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. I, p. 132.

71. *Chamba District Gazetteer* pp. 149-50; J. Hutchison & J. Vogel, *History of Punjab Hill States*, Vol. I, pp. 328-29.

72. *Kangra District Gazetteer, 1924-25*, p. 118.

73. *Gazetteer of Suket State 1927*, p.33.

money was fixed at Rs.11,000, the sum payable to the Sikhs.⁷⁴ The right of adoption was also granted later, on the failure of direct heir. During 1857 revolt, family trouble was going on in Suket state. Due to mutual differences among *Raja* Ugar Sen, Tikka Rudrasen and *Wazir* Narottam, rebels of area could not get much support from state authorities in 1857 uprising.

The uprising of 1857 did take place in the area of Himachal Pradesh, though not so that extent as at other places in Hindustan. In fact, it is clear from a perusal of contemporary literature that the mutiny of 1857 did not evoke any sense of national feeling, at least in the area of Himachal Pradesh. It is on record that mass population of Himachal Pradesh remained unaffected. Even in some area, the local people also helped the British in capturing the mutineers. In the Kangra hills, the mass of population exhibited friendliness and a spirit of loyalty toward the British government. In Nurpur some hill people also helped the British by capturing the fugitive mutineers of the Sialkot Brigade. No doubt in Himachal Pradesh, there had been harbouring a great deal of a resentment against British rule, but it was purely from the side of sepoys and some disappointed rulers of princely states like *Raja* Shamsher Singh⁷⁵ of Rampur and Pratap Singh of Kullu.

Most of the hill chiefs remained loyal to the British and helped them with money and forces in suppressing the revolt.⁷⁶ Among the hill chiefs who gave active assistance to the British in crushing down the uprising in Himachal Pradesh, mention may be made of the chiefs of Keonthal, Koti, Balson, Bilaspur, Sirmour, Baghal, Dhami, Bhajji, Jubbal, Chamba, Nurpur, Mandi, Siba and Nadaun. In recognition of their services during the revolt, they were handsomely rewarded by the British with the salute of guns, *Khillats* and honorary titles apart from several gifts. For his service rendered

74. J. Hutchison & J. Vogel, *History of Punjab Hill States*, Vol.I, p.368.

75. He was the first princely ruler of Himachal Pradesh to act in a hostile way to the British and refused to pay tribute in 1857. He offered no aid or supplies to the British and even treated the officials travelling through his territories with contempt. However, it could not be assessed, based on the material at our disposal, as to how far the *Raja* sympathized with the rebels.

76. The following statement of forces supplied by these hill chiefs shows the amount of aid they so nobly gave during mutiny to British:

State	Gunners	Infantry	Money
Sirmour	-	60	Rs.20,000
Baghal	150	-	-
Kehlur	50	250	-
Nalagarh	-	100	-
Chamba	-	300	-
Nurpur	-	50	-
Siba	-	50	-
Mandi	120	60+50	Rs.1,25,000+ (Rs.15000 by Wazir Gosaon)
Baghal, Keonthal Dhami, Koti, Bhajji and Jubbal	-	250	-

in 1857 revolt *Raja* Shamsheer Prakash of Sirmour received a *khillat* together with a salute of seven guns, which were raised to 11 in 1867 and again 13 in 1876, and later during the Viceroyalty of Lord Lytton, he was appointed a member of the imperial legislative council. He was made a *Knight Commander* of the most exalted order of the star of India in 1876, and *Grand Commander* of the same order in 1887.⁷⁷ *Raja* Hira Singh of Bilaspur was honoured with a salute of 11 guns, valuable *Khillat*, and other gifts.⁷⁸ In acknowledgement of the service of Thakur Jograj of Balson, a *sanad* was granted to him on 24 July 1858, by Lord Canning conferring on him and his heir the title of *Raja* along with grant of *khillat*, valued Rs.1000.⁷⁹ Rana Goverdhan Singh of Dhami was rewarded by remission of half of the tribute, for his lifetime by the British government.⁸⁰

The revolt of this area also failed because the sepoys stationed in the hills failed to establish their supremacy unlike their counterparts in Oudh and Rohilkhand. Although the reports of the so-called first war of independence created panic among the Europeans in Himachal Pradesh, but it was largely imaginary, the most of the area remained unaffected. In 1858, William Hay, Shimla's Deputy Commissioner also reported that Shimla was the safest place in India during mutinies of 1857.

77. *Gazetteer of the Sirmour State*, 1934, p.19; S.S. Chark, *History and Culture of the Himalayan States*, Vol.II, pt.II, p.186.

78. *Memoranda on the Indian States, By the British Authority*, New Delhi, 1939; pp. 150-164.

79. C.U. Atchison, *A Collection of the Treaties, Engagements and Sanad Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Vol. IX, pp.93-103.

80. *Punjab State Gazetteers*, Vol.VIII; *Shimla Hill State, Dhami State*, p.4.

THE POLEMICAL HISTORY OF TWENTIETH CENTURY PUNJAB : A CASE STUDY OF SONA ULLAH AMRITSARI

B.A. Khan *

The present article seeks an attempt to offer a reasonably fair place to Sona Ullah Amritsari (1868-1948), an erudite scholar, a famous theologian, mufasir-i-Quran (an exegetist), editor of *Ahl-i-Hadith* (a weekly periodical that remained in circulation for nearly half a century during his life time), imam-ul-munazirin (leader of the polemist)—who to his ceaseless efforts not only succeeded in consolidating and strengthening the solidarity of the *Ahl-i-Hadith* in the twentieth century but also disseminating the credo of socio-religious reform to the wider audience through his prolific writing and articulation. Unlike his religious preceptor and teacher Moulana Nazir Husain, Muhaddith-i-Dehlavi (who spent major portion of his life in teaching at "Madrassa-i-Miyan Sahib" situated at Pathak Habbash Khan Delhi, renamed now Tilak Nagar), Moulana Amritsari on the other hand, travelled extensively to various parts of India with an avowed objective of not only reforming and revitalizing the Muslim society but also desired to give a sense of identity to the followers of the *Ahl-i-Hadith* in the Indian Islam. However, his writings and speeches delivered at various places often made him a controversial figure not only amongst the non-Muslims but also among Muslims including the *Ahl-i-Hadith*.

The polemical history of Islam in modern India unfortunately has not received the attention it deserves despite the fact that the source material for research is both extensive and varied. The scholars of modern India belonging to various ideological groups and shades of opinion in one or the other reason do not lend credence to this vital aspect of source material and to our optimism if tapped and properly utilized would unravel many aspects of the emerging religious trends in modern India as well as its bearings on the Hindu-Muslim relations. The utilization of this mine of information available in Indian vernacular will not only open new vistas of research in Indian historiography but will also offer avenues in augmenting the available literature encompassing various themes of Indian history.

It is worthwhile to mention here that most of the works of Sona Ullah Amritsari were written in defense of Islam against the scurrilous attacks of Christian missionaries, Arya Samajists, Sanatan

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Dharmists,¹ Sangthis and also of the newly born Muslim groups like Ahl-i-Quran, Nechriya (a term often used in his 'Tafsir-i-Sanai' against the modernist interpretation of Islam by Syed Ahmad Khan) in addition to what he himself called pernicious religious ideology of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. There is no dearth of materials on Moulana's resplendent personality it is nonetheless scattered in various libraries and seminaries, archival repositories of India and Pakistan, official records, besides a good deal of information can also be elicited about various socio-religious and political activities of Moulana from non-conventional sources like interviews with living elders across the fence. As is true of other reformist/revivalist movements of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries a good deal of material of the Ahl-i-Hadith movement also remained under the possession of private individuals. And whatever little has been written about Moulana lacks an objective analysis more so when viewed in the backdrop of religious developments with its bearing on him. Thus to our limitations we have to lean heavily on written source material to our accessibility in India. It is not to be wondered at therefore that our humble effort will just be the tip of the iceberg of myriad of facts pertaining to the polemical life and activities of Moulana Amritsari. Hence there is every scope to make further research focusing on different facets of Moulana's dynamic & versatile life.

Born at Amritsar from an average Kashmiri family that according to one report migrated to Punjab² in 1860 during the despotic rule of Maharaja

1. The radical group of the Arya Samaj whose top ranking leaders included Lekh Ram, Lala Munshi Ram, Lala Ralia Ram etc. These leaders are credited to have preached and propagated the tenets of Samaj to the wider audience and succeeded in influencing the minds of some of the individuals who in turn played a vital role in the organizational activities. Spencer Laval, *The Ahmadiya Movement*, Delhi, 1974, p. 78.
2. The Kashmiri Muslims especially *shawlbafs*, *rafugars*, *karkhandars* etc., with their ancillary staff under the tyrannical and despotic rule of the Dogra rulers of Kashmir at times made en-masse migration to the plains of Punjab not only to evade excessiveness perpetrated upon them by the Government machinery but also to seek livelihood for themselves and for their families. The other category of people *inter alai* included artisans, workers and peasants whose lives had been made miserable owing to rack-renting, exactions, cesses and other kind of imposts. The peasant was not only robbed of the major portion of his produce but had to go through ordeals of life included the inhuman practice of beggar (*corvee*) or forced labour. Such enmasse migrations to the plains of Punjab were often fraught with dangers due to abysmal conditions of mountain passes. One positive result of these visits however was that it forged cultural and historical ties with the fertile soil of Punjab notwithstanding the political vicissitudes and other odds of life faced by the Kashmiris. It is worth noting that if a Kashmiri visits to other parts of India the only name comes on to his lips would be Punjab. And in the same manner if any one visits the Valley from Indian States he is deemed to have come from Punjab as proverbial it became especially among the women folk of Kashmir that they could not think beyond the name of Punjab. It is worthwhile to mention here that it were the Kashmiri Muslims-whose ancestors had settled in Punjab at different historical periods- who are credited to have raised voice against the autocratic rule of the Dogra rajas and as such tried their level best to generate political consciousness among the Kashmiris much before Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah appeared on the political horizon of the Valley. Among the well known leaders of Kashmir descend included Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Dr.Saif-ud-din Kitchloo, Munshi Mohammad Din Fouq, Sona Ullah Amritsari, etc.

Ranbir Singh. Sona Ullah settled at Amritsar until the partition of India, in which like many others he also in the communal frenzy lost his son as well as library (in which he had rare collection of books and some manuscripts) for which he had to repent the rest of the life.³

Originally belonged to Mattoo *gotra*⁴ (patronymic) of Kashmiri Brahmins the descendants of Moulana Amritsari according to one view embraced the religion of Islam during the time of Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70), the liberal Sultan of Kashmir. His father Khizr Joo was a *rafugar* (darker) of Pashmina wool,⁵ the most delicate and the costliest fabric in the world of commerce and one of the main products of export from Kashmir.

Moulana Amritsari received his early education at his home town at Amritsar from Ahmad Ullah Amritsari, rais of Amritsar and then learned exegetical sciences from Hafiz-ul-Hadith Moulana Abdul Mian Wazirabadi who gave him *sanad* (certificate) of Hadith in 1889. Here he had religious discussions with Christian missionaries on various controversial issues of theological nature that made him popular even during his adolescence. Moreover it also created an element of boldness in him to face future debates with his contenders and adversaries in a most befitting manner.⁶

As was known for generations as a centre for Hadith studies, Delhi often attracted Muslims with inquisitive bent of mind to learn Hadith sciences in the 2nd half of the nineteenth century from a famous theologian Moulana Nazir Husain—who became a heir apparent of the school of Wali Ullah after Shah Mohammad Ishaq's migration to Mecca—which brought about a change in his religious outlook the ample demonstration of which can be gleaned from his later writings. Having acquainted himself with the revivalist ideology at Delhi he in order to make a comparative study of various religious trends in vogue in India, went to Dar-ul-Ulum Deoband

3. Sona Ullah Amritsari, *Tafsir-i-Sanai*, Delhi, Rep.1385 A.H.; The significance of tafsir could well be gauged by the fact that it has already gone five times in the press and as such has earned name in the Islamic intellectual circles in the modern times not only in India but also in other parts of the Muslim world.
4. After their conversion to Islam the Muslims retained the Hindu 'krams' or caste names like Nayak, Tante, Lone, Mantoo, Yatoo etc. For details see Ernest Neve, *Beyond The Pir Panjal*, London, 1915, p.164; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 1909; W.R. Lawrence, *Provincial Series*, 1909.
5. Sona Ulla Amritsari, *op.cit.*, p.51; Moulana Abdul Majid Suhdarvi, *Sirat-i-Sanai*, Lahore, 1989, p.98. The brother of Amritsari namely Ibrahim also engaged with the profession of his father and helped Moulana in learning this craft but latter failed to acquire any workmanship in it as he was destined to play a far greater role in the socio-religious history of Islam in India.
6. Moulana Abdul Majid, *op.cit.*, pp.118, 119; Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, *Maarif*, No.5, Vol.61 Jameed-us-Sani 1367/May 1968, p.387. An article dealing with different aspects of Moulana Amritsari's life published by the editor in the above issue of *Maarif* was a tribute paid to Moulana after his death in 1948 at Sargodha in Punjab (Pakistan).

and remained there for over two years under the tutorship of Mahmud-ul-Hasan,⁷ the famous personage who during the freedom struggle had to remain in exile under the draconian laws of the British Government. He made a thorough study of the books on jurisprudence particularly of the school of Abu Hanafi, a school being strictly adhered to by the Dar-ul-Ulum. This brief description about Moulana's life should not in any way be construed as a digression from the main theme but necessitated it form a holistic understanding of the Moulana's controversialist personality that emerged in the backdrop of religious climate of India.

Having acquired knowledge of the *Quran*, Hadith, Tafsir-i-Quran, Tafsir-i-Hadith, fiqh, grammar, Moulana Amritsari in order to give vent to his avowed religious feelings and to win over the confidence of hundreds of Muslims towards revivalism and reformation, started his famous journal under the title '*Ahl-i-Hadith*' from his home town Amritsar in 1903 that for a long time continued defending the religion of Islam against outrageous attacks not only on the part of some Muslim heretical groups but also from the Arya Samajists, Shuddi, Sanghathan and Christian missionaries and so on. In the '*munaziras*' and '*mubahilas*' Moulana's manoeuvrability of vindicating and clinching his argument and outwitting his opponents earned him an approbation of imam-ul-munazirin, leader of polemicists. About him, Sulaiman Nadvi remarked: "He was one who defended Islam from the attacks of Qadianis, Aryas, Christians and some heretical groups among the Muslims; and often represented and debated on behalf of the Muslims in general and those of the Ahl-i-Hadith in particular in various pockets of India from the lands at the foot of the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal".⁸

What is of importance to note that the holding of such '*munaziras*' in the post independence era has become moribund due to a number of reasons particularly publications of literature on a massive scale by various religious groups-making the fullest use of printing press—thereby bringing home to the people their point of view. Add to this is the fact that knowledge no longer remained the prerogative of ulama or religious heads while those neither to be the products of Muslim seminaries like Dar-ul-Ulum Deoband or Nadwat-ul-Ulum Lucknow nor having sufficient knowledge of Islamic subjects also began writing, giving speeches and pronouncing fatwas on issues confronting Muslims. This eventually led to the substantial fall in the domination of the erstwhile religious class as they no longer under secular agencies commanded that respect, reverence and privileged position in the

7. *Ibid.*, pp.120122; Here he received '*maqul*' and '*manqul*' or traditional and rational sciences from Mahmud-ul-Hasan and thus had a benefit of understanding the teaching standards of Punjab and Deoband. Sona Ullah was a known critique of his times and his inquisitiveness did not allow him to remain silent on issues of theological nature, a fact conceded even by the chief of Deoband. See *Maarif*, No.5, Vol.61, Jameed-us-Sani 1367/May 1968, p. 387.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 388.

body politic of India which they had enjoyed during centuries of Muslim rule, nor could they now in the changed scenario claim to be the grantees of land (madid-i-mash), a claim often met by the Sultans of Delhi and the Mughal emperors. Keeping in view their imperialistic designs the British also succeeded in fomenting discord among the Muslims for perpetuating their rule. The very free use of pen by Muslims with different ideological leanings often led to controversies among different factions and hardly was there any faction that ever tried to play a constructive role in unifying the discordant voices among the Muslims in an hour of despondency under the British Raj. Instead, it sought refuge in considering itself alone to be the followers of "Ahl-i-Sunnat-wa-Jamaat", that too often at the exclusion of others.⁹

As has rightly been said that only such personalities become controversial figures in the pages of history that either speak or write in favour or against something as compared to those Muslim intellectuals who advertently or inadvertently elude themselves from being recorded; or never desired to stick into the mire of controversies. Considering the immense production of polemical literature Moulana did create his admirers as well as adversaries. It is also true that owing to his polemical orientation Moulana often debated either with the heads of the newly born religious groups amongst the Hindus as well as the Muslims or their immediate followers, besides on other theological issues, over the hotly debated issues of the correct interpretation of Islam. The following pages will fully demonstrate this aspect of Moulana chequered life.

It is in place to mention that the Ahl-i-Hadith leadership of Punjab would be incomplete without a reference to the Ahmadiya Movement and its subsequent impact on the Muslim society. Through the publication of his most impressive and celebrated work "*Burhan-i-Ahmadiya*" Mirza Ghulam Ahmad initially succeeded in leaving an indelible impression in the minds of certain individuals including Syed Mohammad Husain Batalvi¹⁰ (a front rank Ahl-i-Hadith leader of Punjab) who was all praise for Mirza for writing against the formidable enemies of Islam like Arya Samaj and others. The former was so much enamoured of the scholarship of Mirza Ahmad that he had to remark that the kind of work had not hitherto been written in Islam. Such a comment about the book was made when the Ahmad's claim of 'mujaddidiya' had already been known to the people remarked by Moulana

9. Sona Ullah, *Tafsir-i-Sanai*, op.cit., p.488; *Hadith-i-Nabvi aur Taqlid-i-Shaksi*, Amritsar, 1913, p.27.

10. Mohammad Husain infact had to write reviews on "Burhan-i-Ahmadi" in a series of articles in his self-edited paper supporting the views of Mirza Ahmad on various issues at least until 1884 (when Ahmad had not claimed to be 'masih maud') particularly on the hotly debated issue of jihad where both seem to have followed the identical views. Spencer Lavan, op.cit., p.13; Mohammad Husain, *Ishat Sunnah*, Vol.7 (1884), Batala; Maarif, op.cit., p.387.

Mohammad Ali (the famous leader of the Ahmadiya Movement of India).¹¹ However, he turned to be the arch enemy of Mirza Ahmad when latter claimed to be 'masih maud', 'mahdi' and later on 'nabi', issues which continued to be debated even in Ahmadiya circles with divergent points of view. Such claims had been made by Mirza in several of his most controversial works of "*Fatah-i-Islam*", "*Tanzila Maram*", and "*Azala Aoham*". These works nevertheless created a storm of opposition in the Muslim circles against the Mirza and his followers. Husain Batalvi tried to make it a major focus of attention to spurn the so called revelatory claims of Mirza. The acrimony between the two reached such a state of virulence that Government of Punjab had to pass orders against prophesying the wrath of God against one another.¹² Also Husain Batalvi in order to prove the claims of Mirza Ahmad as spurious sought opinions from various ulama (as had been the practice in those days) of Punjab and other parts of India with the purpose of endorsing his point of view of considering Mirza as an apostate from Islam mainly due to latter's revelatory claims and irreligious behaviour that began impinging upon the very fundamentals of Islam. Thus the main architect of the much heard joint *fatwa* of ulama with their seals and signatures against the Mirza in the year 1891 was Husain Batalvi.¹³ Among the signatories included the famous theologian of Delhi, Moulana Nazir Husain, with whom Mirza agreed to have a debate at Delhi. Though as many as 500 persons according to one estimate, assembled in the famous Jama Masjid at Delhi but debat could not take place as the venue turned to be mere disturbance rather than a debate.¹⁴

Having continued the tradition of his spiritual mentor, Moulana Amritsari from the very beginning of twentieth century also diverted his attention towards writings against Mirza Ahmad and his often known controversial claims, much to the chagrin of the Muslims of India. In every issue of his weekly widely read paper (at least among the Ahl-i-Hadith in northern parts of India) he waged a relentless tirade against Ahmadiyas, denouncing Ahmad as an imposter and often used a sobriquet of 'Mirzais' and 'Qadiyanis' the terms repudiated by Mirza Ahmad and his followers in

11. Moulana Muhammad Ali, *Tahrik-i-Ahmadiya*, translated and edited by Muhammad Tufail under the title, "*The Ahmadiya Movement*", Lahore, 1973, pp.3,4; Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.*, pp.35,36.

12. Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.*, p.55.

13. A.R. Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, Part I, Lahore, 1949, pp.184-195; Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.* p.51. In this joint *fatwa* the following are some of the expressions used:

'Dajjal' a word taken to mean personification of all vices by the issuers of the *fatwa* (*Fatwa Ulama Punjab wa Hindustan*, p.41); 'Dhurriyyatud Dajjal' i.e., children of dajjal, 'Kadhahab' i.e., a confirmed liar and fabricator; 'Mulhid wa Zindig' i.e. a faithless infidel and a double dealing heretic; 'Bad-tareen-i-Khalq' i.e., the most wicked of God's creatures; 'Ashaddul-murtadden' i.e., worst of apostates; 'Usper Khuda ki la' nat' i.e., accursed of God and other derogatory terms were used against him. For details see Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.* p.60.

14. Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.*, p.51.

the similar strain as had repudiated the terms 'Wahhabi', 'Najadi', 'Shafi' etc. by the Ahl-i-Hadith for themselves. To respond to such challenges Mirza Ahmad would often invite his rivals to 'mubahila'¹⁵ as had earlier been done with Moulana Dastagir, Moulana Ismail Aligarhi, and Dr. Dovee¹⁶ etc. and to him they all died due to his prophecies.

Suffice it to mention that the last quarter of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century witnessed holding of numerous debates and 'mubahilas' among the contenders. Many such occasions attracted people across group or party affiliations. This period also saw inter alia the growth of public opinion and the publication of polemical literature. As a well known and an accepted leader of the revivalists, Sona Ullah Amritsari participated into many such debates either through press or platform. Hardly could one find any issue in the *Ahl-i-Hadith* weekly that did not make a derogatory reference to the religious ideology of the Ahmadiyas. The anti-Ahmadiya propaganda and anti-Ahmadiya polemical literature on the part of the Ahl-i-Hadith as claimed by the latter was greatly responsible in undermining the influence of the Ahmadiya's in Punjab and the adjoining areas. The census of India fully illustrates this assumption as the membership of the Ahl-i-Hadith increased two-fold to those of the Ahmadiyas.¹⁷

Besides Amritsari published a separate monthly paper under the title '*Murqah-i-Qadiyan*' in 1907 (after its brief history of a couple of years it merged with the main official organ of the Ahl-i-Hadith), the pages of which embellished with Quranic quotations were exclusively devoted to condemn the Ahmadiya thought, a thought which according to him damaged the very cause of Islam in India. The claims and rival claims of the leaders were actually rooted in rival interpretations of the text of scripture. Such had been the impact of the writings of Moulana Amritsari or as admitted by Mirza Ahmad himself the usage of derogatory words like 'mulhid', 'mardud', 'miftari', 'mufasid', 'kazab', 'dajal', 'krishan qadiani' etc. forced the latter to invite Amritsari on 'mubahila'.¹⁸ The challenge in an open letter was published by Mirza in *Al-Hakum* dated 15th April 1907, one year before the death of Mirza, under the heading "sona ullah kai saath akhri faisala".¹⁹ In

15. The word "mubahala" derives from Arabic root which means 'to curse'. Unknown earlier in the history of Islam in India, such a debate could be held against the non-Muslims when the opponents would have to call down the curses of God upon each other remarked by Ahmad, was unacceptable to a number of ulama of Punjab who were of the belief that such a debate was permissible among the Muslims. Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.*, p.50.

16. H.A. Walter, *The Ahmadiya Movement*, London, 1918, p.45 ; Spencer Lavan, *op.cit.*, p.55.

17. *Census of India*, Vol.XV, Punjab and Delhi, Part 1st, 1921, p.176.

18. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 29th March, 1907; 26th April 1907; 17th Feb. 1911; *Murqa-i-Qadian*, June 1908; *Al-Fazl*, 14th 21st, 29th Nov., 1931.

19. *Ibid.*, pp.4,5; *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 12th June, 1908.

the concluding lines Mirza desired and prayed to Almighty *Allah* that "a liar be killed or suffered a catastrophe equivalent to death in the life span of one on the righteous path".²⁰ No for the first time but as earlier mentioned he would often call down the wrath of God upon his adversaries. The 'mubahila' could not be held and the debate remained confined only sending letters to each other vindicating their respective points of view. The previous 'mubahila' with a several individuals like Ghulam Dastgir Khan cut no ice with the Muslims of Punjab as they continued to consider him and his other adherents as imposters. However, in view of the death of Mirza Ahmad in 1908 the Ahl-i-Hadith revivalists in their literature often claimed it to be their victory notwithstanding the fact that it had every time to be refuted by Ahmadiyas on the grounds that the terms and conditions of the 'mubahila' could not be settled between the rival parties and hence the very cry of victory by the revivalists was nothing other than their malicious propaganda remarked by the editor of the *Al-Hakum*.

Another polemical debate on the issue of 'hayat wa mamat' of Jesus Christ and other allied issues of theological nature was held at Rampur on 15th of June 1909, which besides others was attended by Nawab Hamid Ali Khan, Nawab of Rampur.²¹ For a couple of days Moulana Amritsari tried to prove the physical body of Christ in the Heavens on the basis of Quranic injunctions whereas Ahmadiya leader Munshi Qasim Ali like Mirza Ahmad had firm faith over the physical death of Christ, the grave at Khanyar in Srinagar stood a witness to his assertions.²² But to Moulana Amritsari the veracity of this generations handed down oral tradition could not be established except one finds a fleeting reference in "Tarikh-i-Azmi" of some person's tomb who belonged to outside the Valley of Kashmir.²³ Whatever the truth the Ahl-i-Hadith leader had the satisfaction to have been able to impress upon the audience about his point of view and the very certificate from Nawab in favour of Amritsari stood a proof per se.²⁴ What we have been able to draw from the literature pertaining to such debates that the rival parties often claimed victory over others or consider such occasions to have ended inconclusive.

The debate between the Ahl-i-Hadith and the Ahmadiya invariably focused on issues like 'miraj' (Prophet Mohammad's ascension to Heaven), 'khatam-un-nabi' (seal of Prophets), 'hayat wa mamat' of Jesus Christ, 'masih maud' or 'mahdi' etc. Such had been the vast learning and power of

20. *Al-Hakum*, 10th Oct., 1907.

21. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 30th July 1909; Sona Ullah, *Fatah-i-Rubani Mubahasa Qadiani*, Amritsar, 1916; pp.3-8, Saif-ur-Azmi, *Qadianiyat Apnay Ainay Matn*, Banaras, 1981, p.251.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Moulana Amritsari, *Tafsir-i-Sanai*, *op.cit.*, p.414.

24. *Ibid.*, the facsimile of Nawab's certificate in favour of Amritsari is appended in the *Ahl-i-Hadith*, Weekly, dated 30th July, 1909.

wit of Amritsari that his services against Ahmadiyas could be utilized even by Hanafis of Punjab and various other parts of Northern India.²⁵

The major polemical attack on the Ahl-i-Hadith in the beginning of the twentieth century came from the breakaway Islamic sect called itself Ahl-i-Quran, founded by Abdullah Chakralvi. The followers of this sect emphasized upon the centrality of the *Quran* and had least faith in the Ahadith rather considered the *Quran* as the most and only perfect source of guidance and as such could exclusively be followed. The growth of this sect is invariably attributed to the excessiveness of the Ahl-i-Hadith towards Ahadith. Having produced polemical literature to impress upon the Muslims the latter believed that Ahadith meant both the *Quran* as well as Ahadith albeit with a little success as the Ahl-i-Quran continued to write counter polemics wherein it tried *inter alia* to make a distinction between the word of God and the word of prophet. The Ahl-i-Hadith, on the other hand, considered the *Quran* as the 'open revelation' and the Ahadith, another equally important and mandatory for the Muslims, as 'concealed revelation' meant for elucidating and elaborating the first.²⁶ In this tract Moulana Amritsari in the light of the several verses of the *Quran* was of the opinion that one who abided Prophet Mohammad abided *Allah*; the explanation of the *Quran* by Mohammad again was done according to Allah's intuition and revelation.²⁷ But such an interpretation of Amritsari could not make deep furrows in the Ahl-i-Quran circles as its followers continued to cling to their assertion that Prophet Mohammad received only one form of *wahy* that is the *Quran*, which in view of its comprehensiveness covered almost all the basic injunctions of the Muslims. Viewed in this perspective Muslims according to this interpretation were left free in other matters to exercise their own judgement thereby undermining the importance of Ahadith in day to day Muslim life.

In their literature the Ahl-i-Quran tried desperately to prove the uselessness of the entire gamut of Ahadith. It evoked bitter criticism from all sections of the Sunni Muslims including the Ahl-i-Hadith who had a large following in Punjab and not surprising therefore a corpus of counter polemics came from its theologians especially Amritsari. According to latter the verses of the *Quran* could not be understood comprehensively by common Muslims unless resorted to Ahadith and that the Ahadith should be considered as supplementary and explanatory of the *Quran* and one can not remain oblivious of the fact that such explanations were also made as earlier

25. *Maarif*, Vol.5, No.61.

26. Sona Ullah Amritsari, *Hadith-i-Nabvi*, Amritsar, 1913, p.4; Those interested to know the reaction of the revivalist against the Ahl-i-Quran need to consult an article contributed by Abdul Nayeem Mohammad Abdul Azim Hyderabad in the *Ahl-i-Hadith*, dated, Aug.31st 1906.

27. *Ibid.*

mentioned through intuition and revelations.²⁸ To make it more clear he argued that "there is no mention in the holy *Quran* as to "how many *Rakats* a Muslim is supposed to offer in a particular *Namaz* or its methodology or how much one has to pay as alms or the ways and methods of ablution". The Ahl-i-Quran were accused of introducing their own method of *Namaz* and as such were misled from the teachings of Islam.²⁹ These and many other such issues could only be ascertained from the Ahadith. Having quoted various verses of the *Quran* he was of the firm belief that the meaning of such verses makes it abundantly clear that the revelatory explanation of the revelation is itself a veritable '*wahy*'. Again whenever there came admonitions and prohibitions to the Muslims from prophet Mohammad that a particular act should be discarded with, it is again to be viewed in the revelatory context as he was himself mufasir-i-Quran.³⁰ Moulana Amritsari lashed out at those who considered the *Quran* as the only source of guidance for mankind but doubted the equally important source i.e. Ahadith. Furthermore he accused those so called ulama who were pre-determined to make the verses of *Quran* subservient to their cherished desires and to the extent of suiting their temperament. Had they possessed even a smattering of knowledge of the *Quran* these ignorant ulama could not have denied the pious Ahadith of prophet of Islam.³¹ To him the Ahl-i-Quran had gone a step further to Syed Ahmad in its total rejection of the Ahadith.

In view of his enigmatic personality at least in religious matters Syed Ahmad's views were denounced even by his one time admirers included Moulvi Imdad Ali (Deputy Collector) and Moulvi Ala Baksh (Sub Judge) about whom Hali remarked that the opposition to Syed Ahmad's religious ideology actually emanated from their writings³² and a thin slice of the Ahl-i-Hadith followers especially of Punjab.³³ True that he is often affiliated to the revivalist ideology of the Ahl-i-Hadith and latter group also at times made desperate attempts to consider him a veritable follower of their thought most probably keeping in view Syed Ahmad's credo of socio-

28. *Ibid.*

The counter polemics against the Ahl-i-Quran earlier were written by Syed Husain Batalvi and it is on record that the controversy between him and Abdullah Chakralvi reached such a pitch of virulence that the British officials had to intervene to protect latter's life. See Abdullah Chakralvi, *Ishat-i-Quran*, Lahore, 1902, pp.84, 85.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. Sona Ullah, *Tafsir-i-Sanat*, sura 16, verse 64, p.327.

32. Moulvi Syed Imdad Ali, *Imdad-i-Afaq*, Kanpur, 1290 A.H., pp.2-10.

33. To Syed Ahmad the front rank Ahl-i-Hadith leader of Punjab, who denounced his ideas of social reformation and setting up of Madrasat-ul-Ulum, was Abu Syed Husain Batalvi rather considered latter imam of those in opposition to his modernist outlook at least in Punjab. Again, with their "narrow mindedness these so called revivalist leaders under the guidance of Batalvi levelled grave accusations against him to the extent that he had complete faith in taslis". Syed Ahmad refuted such charges and on the other hand expressed sarcasm on the Ahl-i-Hadith that they alone belonged to firqa najia (the group for paradise). See *Tahdhib-ul-Akhlag*, 1296, A.H.

religious reform of the Muslims and also of the performance of some rituals in Muslim prayer like act of 'rafi-yadain' and 'amin-I-biljihar' that had identity with the revivalists. But the modernist interpretation of Islam offered by him with the purpose of making Islam compatible with the changing times however began to be seen with jaundiced eyes by almost all ulama belonging to different shades of opinion and as a sequel to it a barrage of *fatwas* appeared in official organs of different Muslim organizations included the Ahl-i-Hadith. Such a kind of controversy among the ulama in verbal as well as in print form created an uncongenial atmosphere in an hour of crisis and led conflicts to the extent of some times knocking at the doors of British Indian courts. Furthermore in view of their writings on a variety of issues the ulama succeeded in influencing the minds of gullible Muslims in the ongoing process of various community formations. The printing press facilitated and made it possible for the ulama to pervade their influence to the far-flung areas in the British India.

What is worthwhile to mention that one and all organizations in debates, deliberations and discussions considered exclusively itself in line with the original sources of Islam often at the exclusion of others? Seen in this perspective Syed Ahmad Khan in view of his modernist interpretation came to be regarded as a follower of Mutability's, a section among the early generation of the Muslims who gave emphasis to reason over tradition.³⁴ Like Mohammad Abduh of Egypt, he also did accept rational elements of Mutazilla theology and his *tafsir* in particular clearly shows influence of this group over his writings and that is why the orthodox ulama of his times vehemently opposed him and forced him to stop writing commentary on the *Quran*. Unlike the 'Ahl-i-Quran', the 'nechriyas' did not totally reject the authority of traditions but were of the view that unless these were subjected to critical examination they could not form the basis of modern codification. Syed Ahmad further argued as long as this was not done, he was forced to stick to the authority of the *Quran* alone. The ideas propounded by him did not find favour with the majority of the Muslims and the Ahl-i-Hadith leadership of Punjab lost no time in spurning such ideas with disdain. Thus Abu Syed Husain of Batala continued to write against him not unoften calling him a creator of new sect hitherto unknown in the history of Islam in India. He also accused Syed Ahmad of not having any faith in 'siha-sitta' although after *Quran* these authoritative compilations, were binding on the Muslims of the world. To Syed Ahmad there are a number of Ahadith contained in the 'siha-sitta' which were false as the traditionalists did not exercise prudence in sifting and scrutinizing the genuine and spurious from the mass of Ahadith literature, as a sequel to it a sizeable number of Ahadith got incorporated in the literature. Thus besides others he was also critical of

34. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*, Bombay, 1967, pp.115, 116.

the Ahl-i-Hadith for their continued acceptance of the whole corpus of Ahadith in the classical collections as genuine. The Ahl-i-Hadith on the other hand believed that the classical proficient not only were closer to the times of Prophet but were equipped with the resources, the evidence, and the methodology for discriminating between the genuine and spurious traditions of the prophet. All efforts on the part of the modernists now would prove futile argued by Amritsari. The latter emphasized upon the fact that a thorough knowledge of classical Arabic was necessary before any exegesis could be attempted. Thus Syed Ahmad was accused of misunderstanding and misrepresenting the eschatology and angelology of the *Quran*.³⁵

The change in Syed Ahmad's religious views came to the force after his visit to Europe where he was influenced by the Newtonian view of nature. As a result of it he adopted rational approach towards fundamental Islamic convictions including the role of Prophet, revelation and the proofs of prophecy, the miracles and many other issues which eventually created uproar in the Muslim circles of India thus earned him the sobriquet of 'nechriya', the naturist. Having rejected these classical renderings he came to be regarded as an apostate from Islam. The fact cannot be oversimplified that Syed Ahmad did not reject the authority of the traditions absolutely but had the burning desire to make Islam viable to the needs and requirements of the changing times and therefore his critical analysis should be understood in a broader perspective and framework. Add to this the modernist rationalist approach to religion must be viewed from his efforts of harmonizing the laws of nature with Islam. To other theological matters his approach was that of a rationalist, liberalist and modernist. On certain issues he was in line with the Ahl-i-Hadith revivalists. Thus like the latter he was also influenced by the fourteenth century theologian, jurist, scholar and reformer Ibn Taimiyah (1263-1327) who did not subscribe to the general thesis of the closure of *ijtihad* rather believed that the doors were open and should not be considered closed. One could occasionally find references about this great theologian in 'Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq'.

The Ahl-i-Hadith leaders were critical of Syed Ahmad on other counts. They accused him of having no faith in the efficacy of prayers and of the miracles of the prophets.³⁶ One can not lose sight of the fact that miracles are reported in the *Quran* (particularly of the prophet Moses and prophet Jesus) in a perfunctory way and are presented as simple demonstrations of God's power and of veracity of His messengers. The very acceptance of miracles to syed Ahmad was equivalent to the denial of pure tauhid, for a miracle implied partnership with God in the matter of attributes and it was this very belief of the Muslims which had produced among them such bad customs as grave worship, undue homage to *pirs* and other

35. *Ibid.*, p.121.

36. *Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq*, 1314 A.H, pp.123, 124.

unIslamic rites.³⁷ Again as a naturist he was of the opinion that God was deist first cause a remote impersonal God who did no more than set in motion laws that then worked themselves and the efficacy of prayer therefore was not going to change predetermined course of events. The laws of nature were unalterable and even God could not change them, therefore there could be no sense in praying to Him with the object of changing one's fate or destiny.³⁸ About the laws of nature he expressed his views in one of the issues of *Tadhib-ul-Akhlaq* dated 23rd April 1879, the excerpts of which are given below:

"....When man began to ponder over the laws of nature the first lesson he read is that certain events occur in a perfect order whereas certain others due to causation theory. The sun always rises from one side of the sky sets in the other side. The way moon makes alterations from crescent to its full size in a stipulated period goes always in the same fashion; likewise certain stars do not come down to horizon. The changes in the season are observed regularly, after summer is rainy season followed by autumn; the water always flows from the mountains...The trees grow from seeds and from them again sprout seeds...In every age is created one kind of animal specie that grow and grow and die. In the laws of nature there seems to be perfect order in its construction and consistency..."

The purpose seems to have been to impress upon the Muslims that there was no involvement of the Creator now in the laws of nature but such views became highly controversial among the Muslim intellectuals as to their views God's hand is explicitly seen in shaping the laws of nature. The Ahl-i-Hadith also believed that the God's work was not only to create material universe of planets, stars and galaxies, atoms and energy etc. but also to sustain them and it is as such wrong to say the laws of nature work itself without the support of Supreme Reality. According to Amritsari the views of Syed Ahmad were against all theistic religions including Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The general belief among the Muslims is that the laws of nature created by God could be suspended by the will of Creator. Again in view of his faith in the miraculous powers of the prophets Amritsari while quoting the verses of the *Quran*, was of the firm belief that it was through Providence that the Israelites were miraculously saved while crossing Red Sea and the Pharaoh with the host of his armed forces were drowned', a great historical event on which are agreed both the *Quran* and the *Tohra*.³⁹ But he lashed out at Syed Ahmad for his denial of such a great

37. Bashir Ahmad Dar, *Religious Thought of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan*, Lahore, 1957, p.182.

38. *Ibid.*, By such often considered heretical views, Mirza Ahmad was also prompted to respond thus authored "Barkat Al-Duwa" in which he tried to refute the ideas of Syed Ahmad while emphasizing upon the efficacy of prayer and of the miraculous powers of prophets through a number of quotations from *Quran*. See Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Barkat Al-Duwa*, Qadian, 1310 A.H.

39. Moulana Amritsari, *Tafsir-i-Sanai*, Sura 2, verse 49:50.

event of historical significance. The latter believed that "the river was in the habit of changing its course mainly due to oft-recurring tides hence it was nothing new nor should one believe it as a miracle. Thus when prophet Moses in the mist of darkness crossed the sea it was dry but water in the river eventually levelled when Pharaoh with his armed forces reached the centre as a sequel to it all of them were drowned and killed".⁴⁰

For the expression of such hitherto unheard religious views in the history of Islam in India he came to be regarded as a 'mulhid', an apostate from Islam by ulama across the party affiliations.

Having published the most controversial polemic work "*Satyartha Prakesh*" (the exposition of truth) in the year 1875 Dayanand Saraswati, originally Mul Shankar from the Morvi district of Gujarat and founder of the newly revivalist sect known as Arya Samaj-condemned prophet Moses, prophet Jesus Christ and prophet Mohammad besides orthodox Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism.⁴¹ This, however, made him the most controversial and the subject of much debate and discussion in the intellectual circles especially in Punjab where the Arya Samajists had the largest following. In view of his unshakable faith in *Vedas*, the *Purans* as such (under his forceful pen) came under severe criticism, notwithstanding the fact that most of the Hindus looked upon them as hallowed and therefore incumbent on the Hindus. Considering Vedic Hinduism as the true faith and *Vedas* eternal, unalterable, infallible and divine, such ideas nevertheless were bound to create suspicion among a good number of his co-religionists who had firm belief in *Puranas* to be sacred and hence binding on the Hindus, and any challenge to these scriptures would tantamount to the challenge of the Hinduism per se as these came to be regarded as lodestars for guidance. More at the exclusion of other Hindu sects, Dayanand considered Aryas to be the chosen people, the *Vedas* the chosen gospel and India the chosen land.⁴² The other religions in his writings could not be given any credence rather considered these as imperfect and anachronistic. Such ideas however, came under a scathing attack not unoften at the hands of religious heads of other faiths including Islam that held its superiority over other revealed religions.

The controversy that emanated from the outrageous writings of Dayanand created ill-will and antipathy between the Hindus and the Muslims of Punjab in particular and those of the people living in other pockets in Hindustan in general. Besides the publication of polemical literature inevitably sharpened communal differences and accentuated mutual antipathies and indeed created such a golf between the Hindus and the

40. *Ibid.*

41. Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. 2nd, Rep. Delhi, 1974, p.423.

42. *Ibid.*, pp.422, 423.

Muslims that it could not be bridged rather manifested itself on the eve of partition (1947) when the religious bigots crimsoned their sabers by the blood of innocent people across the fence.

Among the other planks of the Arya Samaj was the protection of cow for which the Cow Protection Association was formed in 1882. Dayanand was himself a consistent supporter of *Gorakshini Sabhas* (Cow Protection Leagues) and even was reported to have written a couple of tracts highlighting the economic utility of cattle and the religious merit of saving the calf from the butcher's knife. To him cow was the great economic asset and its preservation was necessary.⁴³ Like any other orthodox Brahman, he also made an association of religion with the consumption or non-consumption of certain kind of food or drink. The consumption of beef as a food by the Muslims and the exhortations made its leaders of Punjab included Moulana Amritsari and Moulvi Ismail Ghaznavi to their fellow Muslims not to give up eating of 'halal' (permissible) food.⁴⁴ The publication of controversial polemical tracts simultaneously with the provocative speeches delivered by the rival parties often led to serious troubles especially in Punjab.

Dayanand perhaps was the first Hindu leader of India who through and through was offensive rather than defensive as is explicitly demonstrated in his writings and speeches. Thus the reclamation or reconversion of the Hindus (earlier converted to Islam and Christianity) through *Shuddi* must be viewed from his offensiveness. It was more due to the Christian missionary's success of converting the low caste Hindus to Christianity that led the Samajists to develop unique ritual of conversion, *shuddi*. The purpose of the movement of *shuddi* was to purify and readmit Hindus who had embraced other religions besides targeting untouchables such as *Rahtias*, *Odes*, *Megs*, *Doms* and certain groups among the Rajputs in order to transform them into members of the clean castes. However in the process of purification ceremony and proselytism it was bound to create tension and discord in the other religious communities.

The Muslim leadership of Punjab lost no time in defending its religion, and besides others no less a controversial figure than Mirza Ahmad had to write to what he called against the atrocious writings of Arya Samajists. The publication of "*Burhan-i-Ahmadi*" by Mirza not only aimed at seeking condemnation of "*Satyartha Prakesh*" but was equally significant in leaving an indelible impression upon the minds of the Muslims of the demonstration of his brilliant scholarship, the work also later on helped Ahmad in finding a group of people among the Muslims initially of Punjab who became the ardent supporters of his often regarded controversial religious claims. The Ahl-i-Hadith also did not lag behind in responding to

43. *Ibid.*, p.423.

44. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, Nov., 1920.

the ill designs of the Arya Samajists through their official organs as well as works.

In view of his profound knowledge and polemical orientation, Sona Ullah's services apart from his Ahl-i-Hadith organization, were also utilized by the Muslims across the party or organizational affiliations with the sole objective of defeating their contenders in 'bahas majalis', 'munaziras' and 'mubahilas'. Seen in this perspective a famous debate on the issue of the authenticity of *Vedas* was held between 4th and 5th August 1906 at Deena Nagar in Punjab in which "Anjuman-i-Nusrat-Islam of Amritsar was represented by Moulavi Amritsari whereas on behalf of Arya Samajists was Lala Sahib Dayal, secretary Arya Samaj Amritsar.⁴⁵ Initiating debate Amritsari asked Lala Dayal 'what is the truth of Vedas'. Reacting to it Lala argued that the very raising of this objection about the veracity of *Vedas* was tantamount to the denial of the *Vedas* as the revealed scripture. Instead of knowing the point of view from respondents on an issue of debate "a new trend has set in the religious milieu of Hindustan that the plaintiff is forced to offer points of negation from the literature of its rival group", remarked Amritsari. The latter believed the Arya leader had nothing to say in his defense. The discussion as usual could not focus on a particular theme as the new issues would often crop up while deliberating a particular issue. Thus the *Vedas*, according to Amritsari "speak against the natural sciences and hence can not be considered revealed". Referring to the Arya concept of 'niyoga' (levirate)⁴⁶ he was of the belief that what could not be made possible by the natural laws had to be imposed by the *Vedas*. Having displayed anger over such a remark the samajist leader made it clear to the public that under compelling circumstances it was permissible to the Hindu woman to be 'niyogan' in the same way it was permitted to the Muslims to make use of pig flesh under compelling conditions. Ironically some of the ideas of the Samajists were opposed besides the Muslims also by the orthodox Hindus as well as the liberal western educated. The orthodox did not like taking back the low caste or others to the fold of Hinduism. They were also not in favour of reviving the old practice of 'niyoga'.⁴⁷

One can not remain oblivious of the fact that the practice of 'niyoga' seems on one hand, to have been an alternative for widow remarriage and on the other, to do away with the inhuman practice of 'sati', as the *Vedas* had prohibited remarriage. However, according to Samajists

45. *Ibid.*, 10th Aug., 1906.

46. A doctrine permitting virgin widows and women not bearing children to have intercourse without marriage. It also believes that a Vaishya woman may have 'niyoga' relation with a Vaishya, a Kshatriya or a Brahmana; a Kshatriya woman with a Kshatriya, or a Brahmana. This means that seed should belong to the higher varna and not to the lower. See N.B. Sen. *Wit and Wisdom of Swami Dayanand*, 1966, New Delhi, pp.115-118.

47. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 10th Aug.1906.

'niyoga' could be performed by widows or widowers but not between bachelors or virgins.⁴⁸ Such a doctrine became a subject of heated discussion not only between the Hindus and the Muslims but also amongst the Hindu intellectuals. Whatever had been the nature of debate between Moulana Amritsari and Arya Samajist leaders but one noticeable aspect in former's writings is that he desired to forge unity among the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs of Punjab for the larger interest of India. From such a known controversialist figure in the united India it might sound strange that he showered praises over Rama and Krishna (the Hindu Incarnations) to the extent that they might have been prophets to their people on the assumption that 'one lakh and forty thousand prophets had, at various times and spaces appeared' according to one tradition of the prophet of Islam but there is a reference of only twenty five prophets in the *Quran*.⁴⁹

In its issue of 8th June 1905, an article dealing with various aspects of jihad was published in the *Ahl-i-Hadith*, the contents of which were misinterpreted by the Samajists to the extent that "kufar be killed for being kafir."⁵⁰ The purpose seems to have been to malign the religion of Islam, argued Amritsari, as there is no reference in the *Quran* suggesting to kill the non-Muslims being kafirs as has been wrongly attributed by the Samajists while quoting the following verse of the *Quran*:⁵¹

Fight those who believe not
Neither in Allah nor the Last Day,
Nor hold that forbidden
This hath been forbidden
By Allah and His Messenger,
Nor acknowledge the Religion
Of truth, from among
The people of the Book,
Until they pay the Jizya
With willing submission,
And feel them subdued.

Explaining the verse, Amritsari believed that the Samajists' myopic visions were often clouded with rancor and spite which they continued to have against the religion of Islam and this is probably the reason that they always tried to distort the meaning of Islamic religious scriptures to suit their temperament and purpose. He further explained had it been the purpose to kill 'kufar' for being 'kafir' then there could not have been any reference of Jizya to be imposed upon the non-Muslims who were willing to live under the protection of Islam, and were thus tacitly willing to submit to the ideals

48. *Ibid.*

49. Sona Ullah, *Tafsir-i-Sana'i*, op.cit., pp.559-560.

50. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 1st Dec., 1905.

51. Yousuf Ali, *The Holy Quran*, Saudi Arabia, 1413, A.H., Sura 9: Verse 29, pp.506-507.

being enforced in the Muslim State.⁵² he was often critical of the Samajists for wrongly interpreting the verses of the *Quran*. The publication of poisonous literature often vitiated the communal amity and created ill-will among the rival factions as is evidenced from the following statement:

"If only for a couple of days India will ever remain under the rule of Samajists the other religions will neither be tolerated nor allowed to breathe in an atmosphere of religious freedom in Hindustan".⁵³

The debate held at various places invariably focused on the same themes. Seen in this perspective a debate held at Lahore in the last week of November 1906 between Moulana Amritsari and a famous Arya leader Munshi Ramji of Jalandhar mainly focused on the issue of '*nikkah bevagan*' or widow remarriage.⁵⁴ What is to be kept in mind is that these debates created uproar and anti-pathy in the already vitiated atmosphere of Punjab. Besides the publication of the various blasphemous works which included '*Vertman*,' '*Rangila Rasul*'⁵⁵ (an anonymous work of some Arya activist speaking ill of the prophet of Islam and '*Azwajmutaihrat*' etc.) '*Vechiter jivan*' etc., also created a gulf between the two communities as was manifested in the communal frenzy of 1947 in which members of both communities were butchered.

The history of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries in Islam in Indian environment is animated with religious discussions and discourses especially on the part of those products of Delhi and Deoband who came forward to defend their religion being attacked by the missionaries often backed by the officials of the Government. Suffice to mention the missionaries could not expunge from their minds to what they called the ill treatment meted out to the Christians in the middle ages in the wake of the conquests of the Christian lands by the Muslims. Such a feeling on the part of the Christians against the Muslims continued to haunt their minds for a quite long time and therefore desired to seek vengeance against the latter. The Portuguese Company of India, soon after discovering the sea route to India not only succeeded in dispossessing the Muslims of their long established domination over the sea borne trade of India but also in the garb of trade made all efforts to convert the Indians to Christianity.

With the establishment of the British rule many Muslims in India thought of the impending dangers to their cultural ethos and to their very faith under the sweeping influence of modernism. Such trepidations the ulama held made them to exhort Muslims not to fall to the snare of Christianity. Unlike the Hindus only a handful of the Muslims could be converted to Christianity during more than one and a half century of the

52. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 1st Dec., 1905.

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*

55. In its refutation Moulana Amritsari wrote "*Muqqaddas Rasul*", Amritsar, 1924.

British rule in India. The Muslim scholars and ulama in various pockets of Hindustan entered into debates and discussions with the *padris* (clerics) with an avowed objective of safeguarding the interests of the Muslims and of their religion and did not want the innocence of their brethren in any way to be exploited by the missionaries. Such exhortations were made by the ulama through pulpit of mosques and the publication of printed material in particular the self edited papers/journals/magazines etc. Among the Muslims the important personage to have been in the vanguard of such debates at least in Punjab was Moulana Amritsari who came to be designated with the title of imam-ul-munazirin, an appellation even accepted by the Muslims with different religious denominations like Moulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani, Khawaja Hasan Nizami, Moulana Abdul Bari Lucknowi, Moulana Mohammad Kifayat Ullah (president Jamiyat-i-ulama-i-Delhi), Abu Tahir Bihari and so on and so forth. The role played by him in the socio-religious affairs of the Muslims of India in general and those of the Muslims of Punjab in particular is to be reckoned with as he did not allow the missionaries to make any headway nor could latter succeed in making conversions in the religiously conscious community of India.

At various places in British India Amritsari had to debate with missionaries on different issues in particular *taslis* (trinity), *aluhah-i-masih* (atonement of Christ). Viewed in this perspective a famous debate with Hindu born Christian convert, Padri Javalla Singh (Professor of Theology and a known Logician of time) on the issue of *taslis* was held at Aligarh in 1906. The root of all revealed religions according to Amritsari was 'tauhid' but to his dismay such a doctrine despite their lofty claims, could not in its true spirit be followed by the Christians as the concept of trinity entrenched in Christian dogmas was in complete contradiction with the philosophy of the revealed religions including the religion of Islam. While rejecting Javalla Singh's arguments, Amritsari believed that Christ was 'maqluq' (created) and not 'khaliq' (creator).⁵⁶

In view of the historical significance of the city of Lahore, it besides being hub of cultural, political and educational activities under the British rule also remained a rendezvous of religious debates and discourses among the different religious groups and rival groups like Christian missionaries, Arya-Samajists, Ahmadiyas, Shias, Ahl-i-Quran, Bareilvis and the Ahl-i-Hadith. Here after the lapse of several years, Moulana Amritsari once again had to face Javalla Singh in a debate on 'aluhah-i-Masih'. What is worthwhile to mention that debates with the missionaries were not generally represented by the white race across the seas but Indian neo-phytes to Christianity as the vernacular literature fully illustrates this point. What is also to be borne in mind that the converts continued to retain their erstwhile

56. *Ahl-i-Hadith*, 20th July, 1906.

names with an addition of Padri, like Padri Javalla Singh or Padri Professor Abdul Haq.

With his polemicist orientation Moulana scarcely left any venue of this nature where not only he actively participated but made his presence felt by his vast learning and persuasive power. Under the aegis of Anjuman-i-Ahl-i-Hadith Gujranwalla a debate on the issue of 'khatam-un-nabi' and 'tauhid' was held between 27th and 28th Feb. 1926 and according to one estimate it was attended by over eight thousand people from different denominational groups including some white raced Christians. These gatherings reflected the growing interest of the illiterate masses in matters of social and religious concern; and such venues also indeed offered them an opportunity to know the point of view of different religious leaders. To hold debates of this kind became a common occurrence in various parts of Punjab in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.

Representing his co-religionists in a debate held at Allahabad in the year 1934 Moulana Amritsari made it clear to the audience that the apostles of tauhid in actual practice drifted away from this doctrine of the Prophets of all ages and instead harped on their traditional religious philosophy of trinity. Among the other famous debates held with the Christian missionaries included the Hafizabad debate (2nd and 3rd Sep., 1928, Allahabad debate (6th Sep. 1916) and so on. Besides the above mentioned groups Sona Ullah had also to debate mostly through writings with the Hanafis, the Deobandi's, the Barelvis and the Shias on issues concerning the legality of congregational prayers of *Jumah*, *Eid*, the legality of paying or not paying *sud* (interest) in India (being termed by some as dar-ul-harb), the taking out of *tazia* and the last but not least the importance of *Madhab*.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN SOUTH-EAST COLONIAL PUNJAB

*Mahender Singh**

In India, an essentially farming country, the importance of efficient cattle for the stability and prosperity of the rural zones can scarcely be exaggerated. The number of natural live stock has an important effect both on total output of agriculture and on the form in which the output appears.¹ "Cattle play an important role in Indian agriculture. Unlike other countries of the world, whose cattle are maintained mainly for milk and meat, in India, these are primarily kept as drought animals for the plough or the cart. The camel, the horse, the donkey and mechanical vehicles are used."² Without them no cultivation would be possible and no produce could be transported.³

Punjab Land Administration Manual also noticed the cattle's importance. In a province cultivated by small farmers the supply of plough and well cattle of good stamp was always a matter of extreme importance. The Punjab especially south-east Punjab also was fortunately a country in which good horses and mules could be bred, and many agriculturists added greatly to their income by this means. In the best horse breeding district the work was in the charge of the Army Remount Department and the stallion belonged to the Government. In less important districts horse and donkey stallions were supplied partly by the Provincial Government and partly by the District Boards. The maintenance of all horse and donkey stallions was charged to the District fund. The superintendents of the Civil Veterinary Department were the advising and inspecting officers in the district, and they deal under the Director of Land Records and Agriculture with the subjects of the breeding of horned cattle, outbreaks of the cattle disease, cattle fairs etc. Stipends were often given by District Boards and Municipal Committee to students to enable them to attend the Veterinary College.

The south-east region had poor resources than most other parts of the Punjab province. This region was far away from the perennial rivers and the river Jamuna's course was along the eastern boundary of the state. The non-perennial river Ghaggar, which passed through the northern parts of this area caused considerable yearly damage to agriculture. Small rivulets, mostly dry except during the monsoon, too, caused more damage. Rainfall was low and erratic; and the peak period, July to September, there were

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1. C.B.Mamoria, *Agricultural Problems in India*, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad, 1958, p.185.

2. *Report of Rural Commission on Agriculture*, p.169.

3. *Ibid.*, p.169.

often early local and widespread floods. The soil was sandy and light in texture. Irrigation through well was extremely limited. Therefore, this area remained one of the most backward and underdeveloped regions of the Punjab under colonial rule. The purpose of this paper is to show that this area was predominantly cattle producing area and British policy retained its animal husbandry and did not initiate any work of agricultural progress.

This region was seen primarily as suited for the supply of drought animals to the rest of the Punjab, as also to certain other parts of India. The determined efforts of the British to retain it as such are reflected in their irrigational policies, emphasis on low value food-cum-fodder crops, with increasing acreage under fodder cultivation. In their attempts to curb the limited efforts being made at substitution of fodder crops by other crops, which might adversely affect this region's cattle wealth.⁴ Animal husbandry⁵ emerged as a necessary supplement to this region's subsistence level economy. However, as encouragement was given only to draught cattle, and not to dairy cattle or to the commercialization of dairy products, animal husbandry never became a high-paying proposition under the British.

The importance of cattle husbandry in the arid and semi-arid parts of the region, i.e., the Haryana Breeding Tract, was evident from the fact that most of the crops raised were semi fodder type which supply grain for human ingestion and fodder for live stock sustenance. The physical features of the area constituted an ideal breeding ground.⁶ In the colonial period its recognition as a breeding ground was due to the abundant grazing after rains, the generally healthy dry climate, and the presence of lime in soil so essential to bone formation for the young stock.⁷

The unfavourable features of this region proved to be advantageous to British requirements. An official report published in 1910, on the question of cattle and dairying in Punjab, maintained :

The physical features of Haryana constitute an ideal breeding ground (for cattle). In the dry climate, sandy soil has an amount of lime essential to bone formation in young stock. Few monsoon showers produce plentiful crop of excellent grasses, dry season scarcity of fodder ensures

4. Prem Chowdhry, 'The Advantages of Backwardness': Colonial Policy and Agriculture in Haryana' *IESHR*, Vol.23, No.3, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 263-64. (Cited hereafter, Prem Chowdhry, *The Advantages of Backwardness*).

5. Animal husbandry is an important profession also in contemporary times and played a significant role for the reconstruction of rural economy. Now Haryana became a 'Denmark of India' in this regard, being there home tract of 'Haryana breed' and world famous 'Murrah buffaloes'. S.P. Gupta, *Three Decades of Haryana*, Shivalik, Chandigarh, 2003, p. 29.

6. The South Eastern region was Geographically distinct from the rest of the Punjab. So this area was only administratively a part of Punjab. M.L. Darling, *Wisdom and Waste in the Punjab Villages*, 1934, 82.

7. Jasbir Singh, *Agricultural Geography of Haryana*, Vikas Publication, Kurukshetra, 1976, p. 344.

sufficient exercise, as extensive roaming of animals to find it. To supplement grazing, stapple fodders are *Jowar*, *Chari*, *Pala*, or leaves of the *Jhar*, Wheat and gram *Bhusa*, *khal* or oil cakes in hot seasons and *Binaula* (cotton seed) in cold.⁸

Agriculturally, therefore, the region seemed eminently suitable for cattle, and very early, the British had realized that "Haryana produced cattle greatly in excess of its own requirements."⁹ It, therefore, quickly came to be treated as a "store", from other parts of Punjab began to be supplied. By World War-I, an extensive cattle trade had been built up to ensure supplies all over Punjab, specially Shahpur, Mianwali, Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan and the control colonies, where Cattle breeding had been completely pushed out by extensive cultivation.¹⁰ There were also exports to other provinces. The southern portion of the United Provisions absorbed a large number of cattle, as artificial irrigation has made commercial crops such as sugarcane more remunerative than fodder crops there. Bombay, Calcutta and Benaras also imported Haryana Cattle; there was even a growing demand from Rangoon and Java.

Therefore, the British had realized that this area can be exploited to the maximum and can be provided some kind of advancement at the distress time. At an early period of distress, i.e. in 1878 Rs. 5000 were advanced to the peasants for the purchase of seed and bullocks and by 31st March 1883 this had all been recovered except Rs. 1113. A further advance of Rs. 50000 was sanctioned in April 1882, and another of Rs. 150000 in January, 1883, making altogether a sum of two and half lakhs granted for this purpose. The sum of Rs. 50000 granted in April 1882 was distributed in cash by the tehsildars themselves after The Deputy Commissioner had made allotments by villages on applications by cultivators. The grantees made their own arrangements for purchase, but were required within one month to bring the purchased cattle to the tehsil for approval and to be granted. The advancement provided by the Government was increased in 1882 to 1883. The details of bullock purchased in five tehsils of Gurgaon district are as follows:

8. A.M.Stowe, *Cattle and Dairying in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1910, p. 67.

9. A.M.Stowe, *Cattle and Dairying in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1910, p. 67.

10. *The Board of Economic Inquiry, A Cattle Survey of Rohtak District in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1935, pp. 25 and 37-38. For purposes of cattle breeding, half an acre of uncultivated grazing land in the barani (dependent on rainfall) land of Haryana region was considered better than three quarters of an acre of cultivated land in areas like Lahore. See, A.M. stowe, p. 20.

Table-1
Bullocks Purchased¹²

Tehsil	Advances made in 1882		Advances made in 1883	
	No. of Bullocks	Amount	No. of Bullocks	Amount
Palwal	131	3880	949	30613
Firozpur	733	18325	646	31204
Nuh	739	18405	1066	35128
Gurgaon	147	4080	838	27086
Rewari	177	5670	743	24432
Total	1927	50360	4542	148463

So the table suggests that the Government was eager to encourage animal husbandry to meet their economic requirement. Consequently, number of purchase of Bullocks increased about 135 per cent in 1882 to 1883 and advances made during this period shoot up to 194 percent.

The adequacy of the supply of cattle was of such prime importance to the agriculture of the district that it was seemed worth while to retabulate the figures. As table proceeds.¹³

Live Stocks From 1895 to 1909 in Rohtak
Table-2

Item	1895	1904	1909
Bulls and Bullocks	125360	87799	95119
Cows	133711	63742	90418
Male buffaloes	2651	1270	960
Cow buffaloes	63083	53848	57093
Young stock	152247	126666	140931
Total	477052	333325	384521

Upto 1895 agricultural conditions had been good and there was an increase in stock which was approximately spread throughout the district with that year set in the dry cycle, and by 1904 stock had diminished 30 percent in the dry parts of the district was a common practice to sell cattle at the spring Jehazgarh fair (which will be discussed later) and buy again at the autumn fair, but here the decline was not confined to the batai villages. Interestingly, the other live stock i.e. sheep, goats, horses, camels, and mules marginally declined¹⁴.

12. *Report of Revision of Assessment of the Gurgaon District in the Punjab*, Calcutta Central Press, 1883, pp. 53-54.

13. *Final Report of the Third Regular Settlement, 1905-10 of the Rohtak District*, Civil and Military Gazette Press, Lahore, 1910, p. 12.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

Table-3
Other live stocks in Rohtak District from 1895-1909

Item	1895	1904	1909
Sheep and goat	65360	130209	121433
Horses	7890	3159	3757
Mules and donkeys	16533	10438	13697
Camels	2971	2362	2419
Total	92754	146168	141306

Sheep and goats which totalled 47103 at settlement and 65360 in 1895 doubled the latter figure in the following five years. They were largely kept by menials who, when times were hard and there was little crop to divide, recoup themselves by keeping these animals for butchers on the *batai* system, the milk and half the kids born was their perquisite. Even jats undertook this trade occasionally in hard times or like their Muhammadan brethren kept a goat when they could not afford a cow. The fact that the numbers had decreased by more than 7% in 1909 was, therefore, a healthy sign. Horses and ponies were a luxury and that luxury was cut down by more than a half between 1895 and 1904. Even camels, which were of little importance in this district and the potters' donkey had begun to recover the ground lost between 1895 to 1904. By 1909 six hundred more zamindars found themselves able to indulge in a mount.¹⁵

Hissar Cattle Farm*, Cattle and horse fairs and experiments were a very valuable agency for stimulating interest in breeding and facilitating the sale of young stock, they could also be utilized for exhibitions of improved agricultural implements and produce and to brighten the prevailing dullness of rural economy by proving an annual district fete.¹⁶

The supply of good bulls was mainly the concern of the Punjab Government Cattle Farm at Hissar, the premier cattle breeding station in India. Its area of over 40000 acres permitted of good grazing for over 5000

15. Rohtak Settlement Report, 1905-10, p. 14.

* The Hissar cattle farm or Hissar bir, comprised an area of 66.4 square miles. Mostly waste land round the town of Hissar. It was instituted in 1813 A.D. by Major Livingstone when the country had not as yet recovered from the disastrous famine of sambal 1840 (A.D. 1783) of the 19 former villages whose areas were now included in the bir or cattle farm were at that time waste and uninhabited and government took possession without payment of any compensation and has since held these land in full proprietary right. Four other villages Rajpura, Sali, Ludas and Dadupur, were taken up in 1825 and a certain amount of compensation appeared to have been paid in their case. *Report of the Revised Settlement of the Hissar District, 1887-92*, Civil and Military Gazette, Lahore, 1892, pp. 62-63; *Hissar District Gazetteer 1883-84*, Arya Press, Lahore, 1884, pp. 49-50; and See, *Hissar District Handbook*, 1961, pp. 18-21, and *Gazetteer of India, Haryana, Agriculture and Irrigation*, Revenue Department Haryana, Chandigarh, 2005, pp. 233-235.

16. *Punjab Land Administration Manual*, p. 312.

live stock and at the same time allowed for ten to twenty thousands of good lay to be collected as a fodder reserve. An indication of the breeding operations carried on may be gathered from the fact that there were (on an average) 1650 births on the farm each year, and 250 studbulls were available annually for distribution to District Boards. There were in 1923 over 1700 Hissar bulls at stud in the province as compared with 637 in 1914, all of them specially selected animals with known pedigrees, and the demand continued to increase.

Financial considerations alone should therefore, lead district boards to invest more money in the encouragement of cattle breeding by organising cattle fairs on the lines followed in their countries, they could recover their expenditure out of the increased revenue derived from the sale of these animals.¹⁷ Between 1916 and 1931, the Hissar cattle farm supplied 4702 bulls to the various districts of the Punjab. Nearly 90 percent of the total number of bulls at work in the Punjab in 1931 were supplied at concession rates from Hissar.¹⁸

As regards cattle breeding, Hissar bulls continue to be supplied to the various districts. Much benefit was derived from the Hissar cattle farm from the distribution of bulls, "A bull located in village or town should be under the charge of the village headmen and the latter should be duty of the Provincial Director of Agriculture to keep himself informed as to what it is being done in each distribution." The system adopted at Hissar by which the cultivators can go to the farm and chose exactly what suits their requirements, is decidedly the best one and should be encouraged. Throughout Punjab, Hissar bulls became popular for breeding. This eventually resulted in the existence of good cattle in this region of northern India. The above mentioned instances, prove that with experience and vigilance people began to appreciate and adopt improvement in live stock.¹⁹

But the out put of the Hissar Cattle Farm was limited, while the demand for studbulls may be expected to increase. To cope with this demand, farm in lower Bari Doab Colony have been granted to private owners on the condition that they breed Hissar cattle. These farms were under supervision of the Veterinary Department. They were stocked with Hissar bred animals, so that the breeding arrangements on these may be duplicate of the breeding done on the Hissar Farm making allowance for the differences of climate and environment.²⁰

Indeed, the much publicized Hissar Government Farm was primarily

17. Trevaskis, *Economic History of the Punjab, 1890-1925*, Vintage Publication, Gurgaon, 1978, p. 36.

18. *Report on the Census of India, 1931*, Vol. XVII, part 7, p. 36.

19. *Revenue and Agricultural Department (NAI)*, April 1890, Proceeding No. 13-15, File No. 42, 3.

20. Trevaskis, *Economic History of the Punjab, 1890-1925*, 1928, p. 362.

concerned with the development of the draught qualities of its bulls and not the increase of milk production.²¹ So much so that there were repeated complaints from land owners regarding the deterioration in the milking qualities and capacity of the cows which they felt was on account of the emphasis placed on improving the quality of bullocks. In 1935, the Rohtak farmers, much to the chagrin of the official investigators were markedly recalcitrant regarding the use of Hissar bulls for breeding purposes on the ground that it brought down the milking capacity of cows.²²

To held the cattle fairs were the part of Government policy to stimulating interest in facilitating the sale of young stock. Sirsa Bull Fair and Jehazgarh Fair were the important fairs in the south eastern region. Sirsa cattle fair was held annually at Sirsa during the month of *Bhadua* (August-September) and at this fair a large number of cattle bred in the district were sold for export. A number of cows, buffaloes, camels in 1880 of the 19149 animals sold, 18541 were bullocks.²³

The animals were sold in many states like Bikaner, Patiala and other states along with south eastern region.²⁴

Another cattle fair for the sale of cattle took place twice a year in September and March at Jehazgarh in Rohtak District; the average yearly number of cattle attending both fairs since 1871-72, had been nearly 3800 of which about half of them were generally sold.²⁵ Till 1871-72 the fees from the fairs were formed and in that year Rs. 8000 were realized. The spring fair was slightly the larger of the two.²⁶

The Rohtak horse fair was started in 1882, and the first fair was held on 30th October that year at Rohtak under sanction of Punjab Government letter No.651 of 30th June, 1882.²⁷ A fair for the sale of donkeys took place twice a year, at Beri in Rohtak district.²⁸ The donkeys were Italian or Arabian breed. No runs have as yet been established for the produce which were allowed to go about with their mothers for the first year and the colts were then generally sold to dealers and the mares kept for breeding.²⁹

21. *The Board of Economic Enquiry: A Cattle Survey of the Rohtak District in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1936, p. 36.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 56; Cited in Prem Chowdhry, *Advantages of Backwardness*, p. 271.

23. The selection of the best bullock was not easy task in this area because bullocks played an important role in rural economy, many private farms were maintained for the recognition of best bull. For the proverbs and selection for best bull, See, I.V.D.S.Verma, *Haryana*, N.B.T. Delhi, 2001, pp. 183-186.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Final Report on the Revision of Settlement of the Sirsa District, 1879-83*, Calcutta Central Press, Calcutta, 1884, pp. 296-97.

26. *Gazetteer of the Rohtak District, 1883-84*, The Punjab Govt. Press, Calcutta, 1884, p. 99.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

28. *Rohtak Settlement Report, 1873-79*, Lahore, 1880, p. 53.

29. *Gazetteer of Rohtak District, 1884*, p. 100.

F.L. Brayne's experiment was most important to the upliftment of the peasantry of this region.³⁰ He introduced many experiments to revitalizing the peasantry. This experiment was so successful and following table speaks itself.

Table-4
Result of Brayne's Experiment³¹

Achievements	Year	Year
High breed bull	1921	1927
Hypher brought in Hissar	8	557
Iron Plough	—	1600
Iron Persian wheel	—	800
Area under new variety of wheat	—	36750

As a result, Brayne's experiment was so successful and as far as concern to the bull they, increased 70 times from 1921 to 1927.

Shows and exhibitions were also the part of Brayne's experiment. One of the most important programmes under the scheme was the 'Palwal Show' organized for the first time in 1922, the week long 'Palwal show' was financed by the District Board. By the late 1920s, the show had been greatly expanded. It had the following features.³²

- A. Horse show was organized by the Army Remount Department. An amount of Rs. 2000/- was distributed in prizes for best horses of various classes. The National Horse Breeding and show society used to present one silver medal each year.
- B. Cattle show was also run by the Army Remount Department. The judging was undertaken by the civil Veterinary Department, a silver medal was the coveted prize for the best cattle.
- C. The Stock Breeding court showed the advantages of cross breeding from good bulls and selected cows, half bred Marino rams etc.

As table shows, the Haryana (South-East Punjab) tract had a near monopoly of cattle sales in British Punjab. This area contributed 99 percent of the sale of cattle in British Punjab in 1939 and over half the total number of cattle traded in all India (Table 6). For this all important activity, even the very frequent famines in this region were considered by the officials, to be "good for the quality of breed" as they naturally got rid of the inferior

30. F.L. Brayne, the Deputy Commissioner of Gurgaon in 1920-21 introduced the scheme called 'Gurgaon scheme of upliftment' and also called 'Gurgaon experiment'. He toured the whole district and saw the wretched condition of the inhabitants of the villages. His own experience led him to envisage something benevolent for the villagers and consequently, he initiated many experiments in this regard.

31. K.C. Yadav, *Haryana Itihas Eyam Sanskriti*, Part II, Manohar, 1999, p. 317 (Reprint, Originally Published in 1982).

32. Chattar Singh, *Social and Economic Change in Haryana*, NBO, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 230-231.

animals. This inforing consisting was considered necessary to maintain and improve the quality of the breed. The Punjab officials also bemoaned the fact that such a practice was not prevalent in other parts of the province which are more securely placed in regard to cultivation.³³

Table - 5

Places in the British Punjab from where animals were brought for sale at ten Annual Cattle Fairs held in Punjab in 1939 and 1940.

District	Total No.1939	Total Nos.1940
Hissar	26620	19444
Rohtak	8171	6189
Gurgaon	2645	790
Karnal	1196	511
Ambala	222	121
Shimla	49	—
Ludhiana	71	—
Jullunder	53	26
Ferozepur	182	16
Hoshiarpur	3	121
Sheikpura	—	16
Montgomery	24	—
Lahore	11	—
Lyallpur	—	86
Total	39247	27394

Source: BOEI, *Economic Aspects of Animal Husbandry in Hissar, A Famine Area of the Punjab*, Lahore, 1945, 63-64.

Table-6

Sources of Cattle Supply in 1939 and 1940 for trade from all over India (percentage)

	1939	1940
1. Haryana Region	53.3	60.1
2. British Punjab Haryana	0.6	0.8
3. Punjab States	16.3	16.8
4. Outside Provinces	-	0.2
5. United Provinces	1.3	1.0
6. Native States (Bikaner, Jodhpur)	28.2	28.8
7. Other Places	0.2	-
8. Vagrant Tribes	0.1	0.3
Grand Total	100	00

33. *A Cattle Survey of Rohtak*, 11-12 and the BOEI, *Hissar*, 11, cited in Prem Chowdhry, *The Advantages of Backwardness* pp. 265-266.

Therefore the region, unlike the other parts of Punjab continued to show predominance of low value of food-cum fodder crops, because the cropping pattern came to be determined by two factors, i.e. the cultivator must grow food for himself and secondly, for his cattle. Without irrigation³⁴ in most areas, there could only be *bazra*, *jawar*, gram and maize.³⁵ Consequently, the area under fodder increased sharply in this region as in 1901-02, the area under fodder was 288987 acres which increased to 797870 acres in 1907-08 and further shoot up to 90265 acres in 1942-43.³⁶ Only a few limited irrigated tracts grew wheat and a few other had always shown a distinct preference for high value crops, such as sugarcane and to a very small extent, Cotton.³⁷

So this region's continued dependence on its cattle reinforced its existing social orders; this was reflected in local proverbs, which abound in praise of its cattle. To cite a few only : ³⁸

Gae dudh hi rakhle, labh uski teen gin

Chha pi bar ghi behle, bachre, bachri bin.

[Keep a cow and count its three benefits: drink the butter milk, sell the ghee (clarified butter) and also own the bull and cow calves]

Yet another maintained : ³⁹

Jin ghar kali roz diwali.

[In a house where there is a black she buffallow every day is a day of Diwali)

However, not even animal husbandary could remain unaffected in the chronically drought prone region, which was exposed to recurring famines and fodder scarcity. In the fodder scarcity years the price of fodder rose sharply, e.g. in 1931 by nearly 70 percent.⁴⁰ And since fodder in normal times was in any case more expensive elsewhere in Punjab⁴¹, the cost of importing in times of famine and drought became prohibitive;

34. The Government did not initiate any irrigational system in this area. An official report dated 1935, revealed it. It is also uncertain that if the Bhakhra Dam Scheme matures, cattle breeding will receive a serious setback and the production of draught bullocks in Haryana trade may be discontinued.

35. *India Office Records: P/8400*, 1910, 28-29, cited in Prem Chowdhry, 'Advantages of Backwardness', 273.

36. Calculated from *Seasons and Crops Report, 1901-02, 1907-08, 1942-43*. For details see, Mahender Singh, *Agriculture in the South East Punjab, 1858-1847*, M.Phil. Dissertation, P.U. Chandigarh, 2002, pp. 92-97.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

38. R.Maconachie (ed.), *Selected Agricultural Proverbs of the Punjab*, Delhi, 1870, pp. 63 and 169; and also see K.S. Bedi, *Agricultural Proverbs of the Punjab*, Public Relation Department, Chandigarh 1962, p. 127; See Prem Chowdhry, *Advantages of Backwardness*, p. 268.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

40. The Price of fodder rose from 80 seers per rupee before the famine in 1928 to 11 seer per rupee in Feb. 1931. See M.L.Darling, *Wisdom and Waste in the Punjab Village*, Reprint, Delhi, 1977, preface.

41. The BOEI, *Rise in the Price of Bhusa in the Punjab*, Lahore, 1949, pp. 18-19.

speculators, both zamindars (landowners) as well as merchants charged very high prices.⁴² Perusal of famine reports from 1878 to 1923 show that landowners often let their cattle die rather than exhaust their capital by buying fodder at excessively high prices.⁴³

The Cattle were the first and foremost targets during the droughts and famines according to an enumeration made in 1875 and 1878 by Settlement Officials, the number of cattle in the Rohtak district were so reduced in numbers due to famine in 1878 the survive were found to be lesser as the comparative table shows.⁴⁴

Table-7
Cattle Reduced from 1875-1878 in Rohtak

1875		1878	
Bullocks	97036	Bullocks	59281
Buffaloes	105540	Buffaloes	50568
Bulls	1545	Bulls	-
Cows	214853	Cows	130772
Total	418974		240621

Thus, Imperial needs, which demanded that this region retain its basic characteristics, continued to emphasise and underline the extreme agricultural backwardness of this region. It was only when this carefully maintained pattern of agrarian economy was broken in the post colonial period that Haryana could emerge from being a perennially deficit region providing, by and large, a subsistence level living, to become a surplus producing state in India.

42. *Report of Fodder Famine Operations in the Ambala Division*, Lahore, 1930, p. 13; cited in Prem Chowdhry, *Advantages of Backwardness*, p. 270.

43. *JOR*: P/1372, 1923, p. 62; see 9th note on "Concession for Export of Cattle during the Days of Famine", by W.Roberts, 39, Cited in Prem Chowdhry, *Advantages of Backwardness*, p. 270.

44. Settlement Report of Rohtak district, 1873-79, Lahore 1880, p. 73; See also Mahender Singh, 'Agriculture in the South East Punjab', M.Phil. Dissertation, p. 56; and also see Karan Singh, 'British Agrarian Policy in the South East Punjab towards 1803-1901', M.Phil. Dissertation, Kurukshetra University, 2001, p. 39.

THE SANITATION ENVIRONMENT : BRITISH PUNJAB, 1849-1901

Gagandip Cheema*

Sanitation is that branch of public health which is concerned with keeping the external environment healthy. The word 'sanitation' is derived from the Latin word 'sanitas' meaning 'a state of health'.¹ After the rebellion of 1857, the unhealthy life of British soldiers was especially noticed. Due to high levels of morbidity and mortality among them the political and administrative pressures began to mount in favour of preventive rather than merely curative medicine.² The factor which influenced this shift was that by mid-nineteenth century Britain was also passing through its own era of sanitary reforms.³ At the same time, Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), 'the lady with the lamp' for whom 'sanitation was a symbol of Western Civilization' was the first one to talk about sanitary reforms in India.⁴ Consequently, the Royal Commission on Health of the Army in India was appointed in 1859 which gave its report in 1863. On its recommendations, Sanitary Commissions were set up in the Presidencies for the improvement of the health of both army and general population.⁵ Later on, the post of Sanitary Commissioner was created in each province. In 1868, the Punjab was given its own Sanitary Commissioner to advise provincial government on sanitary matters.⁶

Earlier, in 1856-66, a code of simple rules was prepared in vernacular and circulated amongst the headmen of towns and villages, with a view to draw their attention to some of the more important principles of

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1. Yash Pal Bedi, *Social and Preventive Medicine*, Anand Publishing Company, Amritsar, p. 5; See also, Jai Paul Singh Brar, "Health and Sanitation Problems and Administration of Amritsar," A Project Report for the Diploma in Urban Development and Municipal Administration, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1975-76, pp. 9-10.
2. David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth Century India*, OUP, Delhi, 1993, p. 67.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Mridula Ramanna, "Florence Nightingale and Bombay Presidency", *Social Scientist*, Vol. 30, Nos. 9-10, Sept. Oct. 2002, p. 31.
5. *The Tribune*, Aug. 12, 1896, *Indian Sanitary Policy, 1914*, A Resolution issued by the Govt. General-in-Council on 23rd May, 1915, Govt. Printing, Calcutta, 1914, p. 1; See also, Mridula Ramanna, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Sidney Herbert was the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Health of the Army in India, appointed in May 1859. Three Sanitary experts, Doctor Alexander, Sutherland, and Fair assisted him. p. 32.
6. J.C. Hume, "Colonialism and Sanitary Medicine: The Development of Preventive Health Policy in the Punjab 1860 to 1900", *Modern Asian Studies*, 20, 4, (1986), p. 709; See also, *The Land of Five Rivers*, (Being Vol. I of the *PAR* 1921-22) Govt. Printing, Lahore, 1923, p. 113.

conservancy and sanitation.⁷ In all municipal towns and villages, inspections were either made by the Sanitary Commissioner himself or by Deputy Sanitary Commissioner or Civil Surgeons with the assistance of members of municipal committees, *tahsildars* and local (influential) officials.⁸ Later on, the vaccinators styled as "Sanitary Inspectors" were employed on sanitary duty during the off-season of their work i.e. summer months.⁹ They were to submit their inspection reports in vernacular to the Resident Medical Officer of their sub-division.¹⁰ On the basis of such reports, it was observed that the towns of the British Punjab were in 'a bad state of sanitation'.¹¹ Mr. DeRenzy, the Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab, remarked that larger towns were the "foci and radiating centres of disease", and the average death rate in them varied between 40 to 93 per thousand.¹² High state of mortality was especially due to close crowding of men and cattle, accumulation of filth in holes and cess-pools, improper drainage and polluted water supply.¹³ The latrines were abominably offensive as there was no receptacles for excreta, so the ground reeked with sickening effluvia.¹⁴ The wells sunk in a soil more or less impure from the foecal saturation of years were responsible for contaminated water supply.¹⁵ There was no systematic and regular system of scavenging in the towns.¹⁶ In fact, the diseases and deterioration of health multiplied manifold in urban areas where the problem of water supply, sewerage and scavenging were of vast dimensions.¹⁷ In 1876, about 208 municipalities were inspected and in about 100 the mortality rate of 40 per 100 and upwards was reported. In Jullundhur, it was 138/1000; in Hoshiarpur 76/1000; in Ferozepur 86/1000 and in Amritsar 70/1000.¹⁸

7. *PAR*, 1865-66, p. 98.

8. *PAR*, 1886-87, p. 136; See also, *PAR*, 1887-88, pp. 146-47, See also, Surgeon, Maj. H.W. Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. To Sect. To GOP. No. 1873, Simla, June 22, 1880, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1880, p. 509.

9. Dt. Surg. Gen. H.W. Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. To Civil Surg., Circular No.6, March 22, 1882, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1882, p. 92.

10. The Civil Surgeon Karnal of Sany. Comr. Pb. Extract from a letter No.136, May 29, 1882, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1882, p. 96.

11. *PLCD*, March 9, 1925, Vol.III, (Lahore, 1925), p. 393; See also, Narjeet Kaur, "Sanitation in the British Punjab", *PPHC*, Patiala, March 1991, p. 272.

12. *PAR*, 1868-69, p. 130; See also, DeRenzy, Esq. Sany. Comr. Pb. To Offg. Sect. GOP. No.275, Lahore, April 26, 1876, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, May 1876, p. 174; See also, SSI to His Excellency the Gov. Gen. of India in Council, No.81, India Office, London, Aug. 12, 1875, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Nov. 1875, p. 847.

13. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. In H. Deptt. No.3374*, Sept.14, 1874, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S* Sept. 1874, p. 405.

14. A.C.C. DeRenzy, Esq. Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. GOP. No.103, Lahore, Jan. 25, 1875, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, March 1875, p. 145.

15. *PAR*, 1868-69, p. 130.

16. Surg. Maj. H.W. Bellew, Sany. Cor. Pb. to Sect. GOP, No. 1260, April 7, 1879, *Procds. of GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, May 1879, p. 313.

17. John F.J. Sykes, *Public Health Problems*, London, 1892.

18. SSI to Council No.157, Statistics and Commerce, London, Aug.22, 1878, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Oct. 1878, p. 862.

Similarly, the village sanitation in whole of the province was in an appallingly poor condition.¹⁹ About 90% of the population lived in villages, but the rural sanitation was practically non-existent.²⁰ No conservancy staff existed to clean up the villages. Filth was heaped up inside or quite close to the human habitation for a long time until it was removed to the fields as manure. There were no drains worth the name in the rural areas and wherever they existed there was nobody to flush them. Drinking water supply was most unsatisfactory and unhygienic. Water was mostly drawn from shallow wells which were unprotected from filth and flood water.²¹ In 1876, the Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab reported about the insanitary condition of the cantonments and 15,000 villages lying within a radius of thirty miles of the military stations in the Punjab.²² In 1887, sanitary defects in another 128 municipal towns and villages were brought to notice.²³

Instead of introducing sanitary reforms itself, the government asked the Municipal and District Committees and other local bodies to own this responsibility.²⁴ H.W.Bellew, the Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab drafted sanitary rules both in English and vernacular for the guidance of the civil and medical authorities. These were distributed amongst the members of District and Municipal Committees and *tahsildars*.²⁵ About 22,000 copies of DeRenzy's pamphlets on sanitation, written both in Urdu and Hindi were circulated throughout the province.²⁶ DeRenzy, the Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab, thought it to be the duty of the district and village authorities to inform a large portion of the native community about the simple elementary rules of hygienic precaution.²⁷ Since the health policy was superimposed 'from above' a 'downward filtration theory of sanitary

19. *Gazetteer of Jhang District 1908* (Lahore, 1910), p. 161; *Gazetteer of Karnal District 1918* (Lahore 1919), p. 207; See also, *Gazetteer of Sialkot District, 1920*, (Lahore, 1921), p. 204; *Gazetteer of Gujrat District, 1921*, (Lahore, 1921), p.158; *Gazetteer of Montgomery District, 1933* (Lahore, 1935), p. 310; See also, *Selections from the Vernacular Newspaper*, Pb. 1897, p. 100.

20. *Census of India*, Vol. XV, *Punjab and Delhi, 1921*, Part I (Lahore, 1923), p. 107.

21. *Gazetteer of Ludhiana District, 1904*, (Lahore, 1907), p. 226.

22. Extract from the *Procds. of GOI* in Home Revenue and Agricultural Deptt. (Sany.) Simla, Sept.17,1879, (*Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Oct.1879, p. 857.

23. *PAR*, 1887-88, pp. 146-147.

24. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. H(M) Deptt. No.8*, Jan. 2,1878; *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Jan. 1878, p.3; See also, Extract from *GOI*, H.Deptt. (M) Resolution No.10/533-44, Simla, Sept. 29,1887, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, March 1888, p. 134; See also, *Procds of Lt.Gov. Pb.H(M/S) Deptt. No.476*, Oct.15,1888; *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S Oct.,1888*, p. 123.

25. Dy. Surg. H.W.Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. *GOP. No.1702*, Lahore, July 6,1882; *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1882, p. 92; See also, Dy. Surg. Gen. H.W. Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Civil Surg. Circular No.6, March 22, 1882; *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1882, p. 92.

26. Surg. Maj. H.W.Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. *GOP*, No.2, Lahore, Jan. 6,1879; *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Jan. 1879, p. 48; See also, *PAR 1876-77*, p. 123.

27. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H(M) Deptt. No.8*, Jan.2,1878; *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Jan. 1878, p. 3; See also, *PAR 1876-77*, p. 123.

knowledge' was propounded. From 1879 onwards, elementary instructions in sanitary matters formed an essential part of the vernacular series for primary schools.²⁸ The Government announced a reward of Rs. 500 for the compilation of the best English sanitary primer.²⁹ The outcome was J. M. Cunningham's *Sanitary Primer* which was translated into many Indian languages.³⁰ The members of *Anjuman-i-Punjab* also favoured its translation in Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi but in a catechetical form.³¹ In the IIIrd class of about 202 middle schools of the Punjab, Dr. Cunningham's *Sanitary Primer* was introduced.³² To promote sanitary education among the masses H.W.Bellew, Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab, popularized lecture method also.³³ Dr. Stephen played a significant role in bringing about sanitary awareness among the masses by delivering 20 lectures in the month of May and June 1896.³⁴ Pandit Balkishen, the Deputy Sanitary Commissioner was deputed to deliver lecture on Hygiene in the Lahore Medical School in addition to his other duties.³⁵

Apart from sanitary education, the sanitary and conservancy arrangements demanded money. Gopal Krishan Gokhale, a prominent leader of Indian National Congress, advocated the utilization of all surplus revenues to the development of sanitation.³⁶ The imperial and provincial grants which were made annually to carry out sanitary reforms were found insufficient.³⁷ Consequently, the district, municipal and village authorities were encouraged to generate their own funds for the purposes.³⁸ The sale of sewage, street sweeping, stable litter, house garbage and manure, imposition of "malba" and "dharth" as village conservancy tax on villages, levying a poll tax of one *anna* per head on pilgrims visiting the Sun Eclipse fair and half *anna* per head on pilgrims visiting Phalgu and Pehowa fairs at Thanesar in Amballa District under the Punjab Municipal Act (Act XX of 1891) and

28. Maj. W.R.M. Holroyd, DPI, Pb. to Sect. GOP, No.1, Lahore, Jan 3, 1879, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Jan. 1879, p.48.

29. Lepel Griffin, Esq. Sect. GOP to Sect. GOI, H.Deptt. No.715L, Lahore, Sept. 13, 1878, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Jan. 1879, p. 47.

30. Mark Harrison, *Public Health in British India*, p. 90.

31. Dr.G.W.Leitner, Barristor-at-Law, President, Anjuman-i-Punjab to Sect. GOP, Lahore, Dec.6, 1879, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S* Dec. 1879, p.1097.

32. SSI to GGI in Council, No.1389, India office, London, Aug. 9,1883, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S* Feb. 1884, p. 19.

33. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. H. (M/S) Deptt. No.365*, May 21,1886, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S* May 1886, p. 77.

34. *Procds. of Lt Gov. Pb. H. (M/S) Deptt. No.330*, June 30,1887, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June 1887, p. 57.

35. *Ibid.*

36. K.T. Shah, *Sixty years of Indian Finance*, P.S King, London, 1927, p. 155.

37. A.M.Dallas, Esq. Insp. Gen. C. Hopls. Pb. to A. Stephen, Esq. Sany. Comr. Pb. and W.O. Clark, Esq. Dy. Sany. Comr. Lahore, to Sect. GOP., Lahore, April 10,1888, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June 1889, p. 212.

38. C.L. Tupper, Esq. Offg. Sect. To GOP to Sany. Comr. Pb.No.107, Lahore, Feb. 19,1885, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Feb. 1885, p. 23.

collection of similar tax from shop-keepers and persons going to the Barri Shah Latif Fair, annually held at Nurpur Shahan, under the Punjab District Board (Act XX of 1883) were certain methods adopted for raising funds to introduce sanitary and conservancy arrangements.³⁹ In most of the cities and especially in Delhi, the people readily accepted the proposal of additional taxation for sanitary reforms.⁴⁰ year after year, the gradual increase in the sale of manure and town sweepings ensured a regular flow of money. In 1887, an income of Rs.99,319 was reported by the municipalities from this source which rose to Rs. 105221 in 1888, and it further rose to Rs. 1,28,804 in 1892.⁴¹ Under the Local Authorities Loan Act (Act XI of 1879), the municipalities and the local boards could also get loans from the government to meet the expenditure necessary for sanitary and other improvements.⁴²

An effort was made to maintain a permanent record of the sanitary history of some selected villages in the province in the form of "Village Sanitary Inspection Book". Its columns were filled up by some literate resident of the village, either the headman, village accountant or any other intelligent person.⁴³ Regarding the maintenance of the "Village Sanitary Inspection Book", Miss Florence Nightingale remarked that 'such a book was a most admirable plan for advancing the sanitary cause and as a stimulus to the people, most fruitful of future good'.⁴⁴

The civil surgeon was made responsible to carry out sanitary and conservancy measures in all villages of his district.⁴⁵ By 1876, the sanitary improvements were carried out in about 41 towns which included paving, widening and draining of streets, guttering, construction of latrines, improvement of the main sewer running outside the city, constructing of *pakka drains* for the flow of ablution and other water, filling up of holes and

39. Surg. Maj. J.Fariweather, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect to GOP. No.2618, July 22,1879, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Feb. 1880, p. 94; See also, *PAR*, 1883-84, p. 440; See also, A.M. Dallas, Esq. Insp. Gen. Of C. Hospts. Pb. and W.O. Clark, Esq. Dy. Sany. Comr. Lahore to Sect. to GOP, Lahore, April 10,1888, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June 1889, p. 212; See also, Translation of Resolution No.1 passed by M.C. of Thanesor at a special meeting held on Aug. 9,1896, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Jan. 1897, pp. 45-46; See also, J.William Esq. D.C.Rawalpindi to Offg. Comr. & Supt., Rawalpindi Division No.935, L.F. Sept. 17,1896, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Feb.1897, pp. 83-84.

40. *PAR*, 1869-70, p. 132.

41. *PAR*, 1888-89, p. 157; See also, *PAR*, 1893-94, p. 196.

42. Extract from the *Procds.* of GOI in H.Deptt. (Sany) Simla, July 27,1888, No.3/212-225, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June, 1889, p. 232; See also, *Procds.* of Lt., Gov. Pb.H. (M/S) Deptt. No.476, Oct. 15,1888, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Oct. 1888, p. 126.

43. J.P.Hewett, Esq. Offg. Sect. To GOI, H.Deptt. to Offg. Sect. to GOP. No.4 Sany/84, Calcutta, March 8,1895, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, April, 1895, p. 66.

44. Miss Florence Nightingale to H.Babington Smith Esq. Pvt. Sect. to Viceroy, 10 South Street Park Lane, W. London, April 26, 1895, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S*, Aug. 1895, p. 101.

45. Surg. Maj. H.W. Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. GOP No.903S, July 26,1818, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1881, p. 666.

ditches, draining of low and marshy tracts and widening of *bazaars* etc.⁴⁶ An attempt was also made to improve the water supply by cleaning and repairing old wells and digging new ones⁴⁷. The utilization of town sewage as manure was also encouraged.⁴⁸ DeRenzy observed that in one of the towns of Kasur District a "Zamindar" had already the sense to utilize the discharge of a sewer by distributing it over his fields.⁴⁹ The town refuse was regularly stored and systematically disposed of as manure for fields and fuel for brick-kilns.⁵⁰ By 1886, it was reported that, in nineteen districts some major and minor projects were either under consideration or in progress or completed. Such works included the completion of the main line of the Simla Sewage Scheme, the extra-mural channel for drainage at Amritsar, the construction of *pucca* drains in the Anarkali station at Lahore. The Rawalpindi water works made a rapid progress. Similar works were sanctioned for Delhi and Peshawar. In Lahore, 110 water connections were given to the houses.⁵¹ In 1873, the total income of 50 municipalities in the Punjab was Rs. 18,99,325 out of which Rs. 63, 220 were spent on sanitary works.⁵² In 1881, in 196 municipalities of 32 districts, the total expenditure on sanitary and conservancy works was Rs. 9,09,637 which rose to 9,61,872 in 1882.⁵³ Subsequently, over ten lakh rupees were spent by 176 municipalities on such works in 1886.⁵⁴ Apart from it, every year some grant was also made to the sanitary commissioner of the Punjab by the Government for sanitary improvement.⁵⁵

46. SSI to GGI in Council, No.157, Statistics and Commerce, London, Aug. 22,1878, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Oct. 1878, p. 869; See also, *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.*, H.Deptt. No.3280, Sept. 8,1875, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1875, p. 756.
47. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.*, H.Deptt. (M/S), No.34/163, Jan. 10, 1882, *Procds. GOP.*, H.Deptt. M/S, Jan. 1882, p. 14.
48. SSI to GOI, No.39, London, March 20,1884, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S* May 1884, p. 67.
49. A.C.C. DeRenzy, Esq. Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. GOP No.103, Lahore, Jan. 25,1875, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, March, 1875, p. 145.
50. SSI to GOI No.39, London, March 20,1884, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, May 1884, p. 68.
51. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. in H. (M/S) Deptt.* No.330, June 30,1887, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June, 1887, p. 57; See also, *PAR, 1886-87*, p. 135; See also, Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI, 1885, Calcutta, 1887, p. 187; See also, SSI to GGI in Council No.139, India Office, London, Aug. 9,1883, *Procds. GOP.*, H.Deptt. M/S, Feb. 1884, p. 17.
52. SSI to His Excellency the GGI in Council, No.81, India Office, London, Aug. 12,1875, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Nov. 1875, p. 853.
53. SSI to GGI in Council No.139, India Office, London, Aug. 9,1883, *Procds. GOP.*, H.Deptt. M/S, Feb. 1884 p. 17; See also, *PAR, 1881-82*, p.176; See also, *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.*, H.Deptt. M/S, No.34/163, Jan. 10,1882, *Procds. GOP.*, H.Deptt. M/S, Jan. 1882, p. 14.
54. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H. (M/S) Deptt.*, No.330, June 30,1887, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June 1887, p. 57; See also, *PAR, 1886-87*, p.135.
55. *Finance and Revenue Accounts and Miscellaneous Statistics relating to the Finance of British India*, Part II, from 1st April 1877 to 31st March 1885, Calcutta, 1887, p. 229.

Table : Statistics of the Grant made to the Sanitary Commissioner of the Punjab⁵⁶.

Year	Grant	Year	Grant
1877-78	£3358	1881-82	£ 4465
1878-79	£3776	1882-83	£5296
1879-80	£4031	1883-84	£4927
1880-81	£4609	1884-85	£4386

Among different communities, the Bagars showed the greatest zeal in the matter of sanitation followed by the Sikhs. Muslims remained apathetic to such reforms. But the principal offenders against sanitary laws were women, "who were too indolent to remove their house refuse to a proper distance from the village".⁵⁷ The *lambardars* who took initiative to remove sanitary evils were rewarded by partial remission of revenue.⁵⁸ The district and medical officers displaying greater enthusiasm in sanitation were granted '*parwanas*' (an official document, printed on parchment, and signed by Sanitary Commissioner and Commissioner of the Division.⁵⁹ The interest of the individuals, village headmen, *lambardars* and *zaildars* in sanitation was aroused by granting *sanads* and *khillats* to them.⁶⁰ Such rewards were given out of the local and district funds.⁶¹ Later on, instead of rewarding individuals, the practice of awarding *sanads* and *khillats* to the entire village communities and District Boards was started.⁶² It was reported that only the District Boards of Hoshiarpur and Jhang were awarded *khillats*.⁶³ Reward of Rs.125 each was given to only four villages in Hoshiarpur district.⁶⁴ These villages were Tuto Mazara in Tehsil Garhshankar, Sasoli in Tehsil Hoshiarpur, Santokhgarh in Tehsil Una and Berchha in Tehsil Dasuya.⁶⁵

56. *Ibid.*

57. SSI to GOI No.39, London, March 20,1884, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, May 1884, p. 69.

58. Dy. Surg. Gen. H.W. Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. GOP. No.1702, Lahore, July 6,1882, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Sept. 1882, p. 91; See also, *Procds of Lt. Gov. H.Deptt. M/S* No.434, June 20,1883, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June 1883, p. 71.

59. C.L. Tupper, Esq. Offg. Sect. to GOP the Sany. Comr. Pb.No.95, Lahore, Feb.16,1885, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Feb. 1885, p. 16.

60. *Procds. of Lt.Gov. Pb. H. (M/S) Deptt. No.4315*, July 21,1894, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July 1894, pp. 133-134; See also, *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. H. (M/S) Deptt. No.5165*, July 29,1896, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July, 1896, p. 122.

61. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H.(M/S) Deptt. No.332 S*, July 8,1895, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Aug. 1895, p. 99; See also, H.J. Maynard, Esq. Junior Sect. to GOP. to Comr. And Supt. Delhi, Jullundur, Lahore and Rawalpindi Division, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Dec. 1897, p. 667.

62. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. H.(M/S) Deptt. No.4225*, July 8,1899, *Procds., GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July 1899, p. 156.

63. Summary of replies received from District Officers regarding rewards of *Khillats* for Improvement of village sanitation, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July 1899, p. 188.

64. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H. (M/S) Deptt. No.422 S*, July 8,1899, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July 1899, p. 156.

65. Resol. No. 5 of *Procds. of an ordinary meeting of DB, Hoshiarpur*, held on May 18,1899, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July 1899, p. 190.

Those who did not abide by the sanitary laws were punished either by a fine of Rs.10 or by an imprisonment of eight days.⁶⁶

In 1888, Lord Dufferin's Government reviewed the progress of sanitary administration, especially the village sanitation. It reported that in spite of the fact that sanitary rules had been made from time to time for sanitation of villages, they failed to exhibit general improvement. It was especially for want of an executive agency to supervise such working.⁶⁷ The want of corporate action on the part of the villages was equally responsible.⁶⁸ Even in the towns a slight improvement was noticed in the main *bazaars* and public thoroughfares; the rest of the towns were left to the care of the *mohalla* residents which received no systematic and regular scavenging.⁶⁹ Consequently, in 1888, a resolution was passed by the Government of India for the creation of Provincial Sanitary Boards.⁷⁰

Accordingly, a Sanitary Board was constituted in the Punjab by Sir James Lyall in August 1890.⁷¹ Initially, it was only a consultative body which rendered its valuable advice and assistance to municipalities in connection with the sanitary reforms and supervised their work.⁷² With increase in the number of sanitary projects, the sphere of its activity was widened and the Board became a consultative, executive and directive body.⁷³ Among the various projects taken up by the Sanitary Board the stress was on village sanitation.⁷⁴ In 1890, a proposal was made to create a post of Sanitary Engineer, who would be a member of the Provincial Sanitary Board, and his services would be utilized by the Municipalities to obviate sanitary defects.⁷⁵ He was to be paid out of the Municipal funds.⁷⁶ Out of 149 municipalities only 15 (Delhi, Simla, Multan, Lahore, Amritsar, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Rewari, Amballa, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Sialkot,

66. Maj. J.B.Hutchinson, D.C.Mooltan to the Comr. And Supt., Lahore Division No.144, Jan. 16,1888, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, June 1889, p. 227.

67. Extract from the *Procds. of GOI, H.Deptt. (Sany)*, Calcutta, March 26,1898, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Oct. 1898, pp. 265.

68. W.Coldstream, Esq. D.C. Hsp. to Comr. and Supt. Jullundur Division No.194, March 26,1879, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, May 1879, p. 282.

69. Surg. Maj. H.W.Bellew, Sany. Comr. Pb. to Sect. GOP. No.1260, April 7,1879, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, May 1879, p. 313.

70. *PAR*, 1887-88, p. 146.

71. *PAR*, 1890-91, p. 20; See also, *Local Govt. Resol. No.5465*, Aug. 5,1890; See also, *The Land of Five Rivers*, (Being Vol.1, of *PAR* 1921-22); Govt. Printing Lahore, 1923, p.113; See also, *Procds. of Lt.Gov. Pb.H. (M/S) Deptt. No.33*, June 25, 1891, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, 1891, p. 35.

72. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H.(M/S) Deptt. No.4225*, July 8,1899, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, July 1899, p. 157; See also, *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. With the GOI*, 1890, Calcutta, 1892, p.187.

73. *PAR*, 1905-06, (Lahore 1907), p. 49.

74. *PAR*, 1891-92, p. 217.

75. H.J.Maynard, Esq. Offg. Junior Sect. GOP to all Comr. and Supts in the Pb. No.175, Lahore, April 14,1893, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, April 1893, p. 46.

76. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. H.(M/S) Deptt. No.545 S*, July 29, 1893, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, Aug. 1893, p. 72.

Gujranwala, Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan) agreed to contribute either 1% or ½% of their income for ten years to meet the expenses of this sanitary expert. It was decided that from rest of the municipalities a fee would be charged if they utilized the services of the Sanitary Engineer.⁷⁷ As a result, in October 1900, the post of Sanitary Engineer was created.⁷⁸

By the end of the 19th Century, most of the sanitary and conservancy projects were either completed, or in progress or under consideration. The works which were finished included fresh water supply to Kalka, Peshawar, Ambala, Abbottabad, Delhi, Dalhousie, Dunera, Murree, Sanjuali Reservoir at Simla with a capacity of 2,000,000 gallons, extramural drainage system at Banga, Kohat, Gujranwala, Dinanagar and Dera Ghazi Khan cantonment, filling up of the city ditch at Amritsar, reclamation of about 200 acres of land for cultivation, and conservancy tramway at Delhi.⁷⁹

The drainage schemes of Lahore, Delhi, Dera Ghazi Khan, Bhiwani, Palwal and Gurdaspur were in progress while in other sixteen towns like Abbottabad, Ferozepur, Jhelum, Multan, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Faridabad etc. were under consideration.⁸⁰ Similarly, the schemes for the supply of fresh water in Amritsar, Sialkot, Haripur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Edwardesabad cantonment also received the attention of the Sanitary Board.⁸¹ At Amritsar, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, Multan, Gujranwala, Ludhiana the sewage from the underground sewers was sold to the contractors for agricultural purposes.⁸²

77. H.J. Maynard, Esq. offg. Junior Sect. to GOP to all Comr. and Supts. in Pb.No.175, Lahore, April 14, 1893, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S*, April 1893, p. 47.

78. *PAR, 1900-01*, p. 155; See also. *PAR, 1901-02* (Lahore, 1903) General Summary, p. xxvi.

79. *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H.(M/S) Deptt. No.512/3683 July 24 1883, Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, July, 1883 p. 91*; See also, *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H.(M/S) Deptt. No.822 S, July 29, 1885, Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, Aug. 1885, pp. 90-91*; See also, A.P.MacDonnell, Esq. Offg. Sect. to GOI, H.Deptt. to Sect. GOP No.217, Simla, July 16, 1886, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, Aug. 1886, p. 114*; See also, *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. H.(M/S) Deptt. No.333, June 25, 1889, Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, June 1891, p.35*; See also C.J.Lyall Esq. Sect. to GOI. H.Deptt. to Sect. to GOP No.292, Simla, Aug. 26, 1891, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, Sept. 1891, p. 65*; See also *Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb. in H. (M/S) Deptt. No.296A, June 27, 1892, Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, July 1892, pp. IV, V*; See also, P.G.Melitus, Esq. Offg. Dy Sect. to GOI, H.Deptt. to Sect. to GOP., No.242, Simla, Oct. 5, 1892, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, Oct. 1892, p. 98*; See also, L.M. Thornsion, Esq. Dy. Sect. to GOI, H. Deptt. to Chief Sect. to GOP No.356, Simla, Nov.5, 1895, *Procds. GOP. H. Deptt. M/S, Dec. 1895, p. 182*; *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI., 1891, Calcutta, 1893, p.163*; See also, *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI., 1894, Calcutta, 1896, pp. 261-262*.

80. *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI, 1894, Calcutta, 1896, p. 261*; See also, *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI, 1891, Calcutta, 1893, p. 163*; See also, C.J.Lyall, Esq. Sect. to GOI, H.Deptt. to Sect. to GOP, No. 292, Simla, Aug.26, 1891, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, Sept. 1891, p. 65*.

81. *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI 1894, Calcutta, 1896, p. 261*; See also, A.P.MacDonnel, Esq. Offg. Sect. to GOI, H.Deptt. to Sect. GOP. No.217, Simla, July 16, 1886, *Procds. GOP. H.Deptt. M/S, Aug. 1886, p.114*.

82. *Annual Report of the Sany. Comr. with the GOI, 1894, Calcutta, 1896, pp.261-62*.

Since the introduction of fresh water supply schemes and drainage systems a remarkable decline in the death rate of water-borne diseases like Cholera, fevers and dysentery was reported.⁸³

By the end of the 19th century, sanitation in the Punjab was still in its infancy. It was too much to hope for carrying out sanitary schemes into 35,000 villages of the Punjab because most of them were unapproachable.⁸⁴ The main obstacles which impeded sanitary improvements were the apathy, ignorance and backwardness of the people. They clung to their deep rooted habits, customs, beliefs and prejudices which were responsible to a great extent for their negligence regarding personal hygiene and sanitation.⁸⁵ Want of efficient executive agencies and last but not the least, the want of funds were the great hindrance in sanitary progress.⁸⁶ To achieve its real advantages the 'sanitation must begin at home' was stressed. So, the medical women were encouraged to preach the 'gospel to health' inside the *zenana* also.⁸⁷

Finally, due to strenuous efforts of the British government, it was noticed that while mortality rates did begin to decline, morbidity rates did not fall substantially until around 1900, because non-fatal diseases such as malaria, dysentery and 'venereal disease' remained a major cause of anxiety until the twentieth century. The effects of the public health administration were, therefore, not limited merely to the prevention of death or even of disease, but to promote the health of people also.⁸⁸ Fortunately, with the passage of time coupled with official patronage western medicine began to exert a powerful influence over mind and body of the people to fashion their thought, feeling and desire. A sizeable number of the natives began to appreciate the precepts of western sanitary system and to look critically at the indigenous customs and life style. Even persons like M.K. Gandhi who were ostensibly critical of western medicine, came to think of India in medical terms, as a "body politic" which had become "weak" and "diseased" and unable to resist infection from "foreign bodies".⁸⁹

83. Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H. (M/S) Deptt. No. 425 S, July 5, 1898, *Procds. GOP*. H.Deptt. M/S, July 1898, p. 180.

84. Procds. of Lt. Gov. Pb.H. (M/S) Deptt. No. 476, Oct. 15, 1888, *Procds. GOP*. H.Deptt. M/S, Oct. 1888, p. 125.

85. *Gazetteer of Ludhiana District, 1904*, (Lahore, 1907) p. 226; See also, Maj. J.B. Hutchinson, D.C. Multan, to Comr. and Supt. Lahore Division, No. 144, Jan. 16, 1888, *Procds. GOP*, H.Deptt. M/S, June 1889, p. 231.

86. J.B. Hutchinson, D.C. Multan to Comr. & Supt. Lahore Division, No. 144, Jan. 16, 1888, *Procds. GOP*, H.Deptt. M/S, June 1889, p. 231.

87. *Indian Sanitary Policy, 1914*, A Resolution issued by the Gov. Gen. in Council on May 23rd 1914, Govt. Printing, Calcutta, 1914, p. 42.

88. John F.K. Sykes, *Public Health Problems*, London, 1892, p. 288.

89. David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body*, pp. 285-286.

DEVELOPMENT OF POSTAL SYSTEM IN THE PUNJAB UNDER THE COLONIAL RULE

*Manjyot Kaur**

The human being having such a nature, was not satisfied with the road communication only, so he invented various other ways for easy and quick communication. The word 'Post' has been taken from a Latin word 'Positus' meaning 'Placed', as the horses were put or placed at certain distances to carry letters.¹ A good and a reliable postal system was and is always required at each level, as it secures co-ordination and co-operation between the central, provincial, local authorities and the officials. It, was and is, necessary for the rulers to have comprehensive, accurate, frequent and latest information from every quarter of the region. So, for all this, an efficient and a regular postal system is very essential.

During the ancient and middle ages man/rulers invented different methods to communicate with their families and officials quickly. Pigeons, personal messengers, informats, couriers, caravans of pack oxen led by banjaras, singers or artists, horsemen, drum system etc. were utilized for communicating sake. *Dawk chowkis* were built, Barid system started during tough rulers.²

With the increase of commerce and acquisition of new territories Lord Clive introduced a regular postal system in 1766. *Harkaras* or foot runners were employed. In 1774 Warren Hastings carried out postal reforms. By the Act of 1837 a Public Post Office was set up, a Postmaster General was appointed. After 1854 rates of the postage were fixed and a Director-General of Post Offices in India was appointed. From time to time various reforms were carried out for the better regulation of the Postal System.³

In the Punjab after its annexation, in 1849 few Post Offices were opened but their importance was not yet realized by the Public. But, with the passage of time, with the spread of education, with the opening up of the country, with the establishment of new branches of industry and commerce, with the development of railways, an increase in the number of post offices

*Ludhiana.

1. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 21, p. 410.
2. A.K.M. Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India*, Idarah-i-Ababiyat-1, Delhi, 1977, pp. 126, 127, 129, 141, 146, 153; and H.C. Verma, *Medieval Routes of India: Baghdad to Delhi*, Naya Parkash, Calcutta, 1978, p.216.
3. "Order for Better Regulation of the Dawks" - Home (Public) 24th March, 1766, p.350; and July 1766, No. 1(a); Geoffrey Clarke, *The Post Office of India and its Story*, London, p. 14; B.B. Mishra's, *The Central Administration of the East India Company 1773-1834*, Bombay, 1959, p.417; Legislative Department: India Post Office Act XVII of July 24th, 1837.

and its popularity within the masses was definitely felt and seen.

In the beginning ordinary police establishments delivered letters, but this service was irregular and erratic, so in 1851 postmen were appointed with a fixed salary from Rs.3/- to 3 and 8 annas a month. So, by 1853 postal arrangements were improved and punctuality assured in the postal deliveries. The above stated modern postal system was introduced by the Act of 1854 and by Lord Dalhousie. Uniform rate of letter carriage was fixed to $\frac{1}{2}$ anna.⁴ The registration of postal facility was done. The lowest rate of inland letter postage was $\frac{1}{2}$ anna for $\frac{1}{4}$ tola and the weight above $\frac{1}{4}$ tola, the scale progressed by 2 annas per tola. In 1905 the weight allowed for each rate of postage was doubled. By 1856 the Punjabis realized the postal importance, so the number of letters started to increase simultaneously.

Year	Letters Carried
1856-57	3,43,641
1857-58	2,66,422
1858-59	5,50,319
1860-61	6,17,583
1861-62	6,10,929
1862-63	7,76,874
1863-64	7,79,579
1864-65	9,04,951

In 1857-58 diminution in the number of letters was felt which was due to the crisis of 1857, as post were cut off at many places and dispatches lost.⁵ In 1866 Imperial Postal System was extended to Punjab and Branch Offices were opened. Accordingly this department was placed as following:-

Postmaster General	1
Inspecting Postmasters and Superintendents	10
Sub-Inspectors	11
Post Masters	21
Deputy Post Masters	204
Clerks	245
Overseers	62
Coachmen and Guards	240
Runners, Postmen and Parcel Carriers	1656
Artificers	105 ⁶

4. Foreign Miscellaneous Series, Sr. No. 165, No. in the list 356-59, para 392; Sr. No. 157, No. in list 368, para 474, No. in list 364, para 107 and Parveen Lata, 'Public works in the Punjab 1901-1947', M.Phil. Dissertation, Department of History, GNDU, Amritsar, 1989, p. 46.
5. Imperial Gazetteers of India Provincial Series, Punjab Vol.III pp 410, 419, 420; Y.B. Mathur, *British Administration of Punjab 1849-75*, Surjeet Book Depot, Delhi, p. 127; Foreign Miscellaneous Series, Sr. No.157, No. in list 365, p. 68; and Administration Report 1856-1865.
6. Administration Report 1866-67; Y.B. Mathur, *British Administration of Punjab, 1849-75*, p.127.

India was divided into eight postal circles, each under a Post Master General, the Punjab and States formed together with the North-Western Frontier Province and Kashmir one Postal Circle. It was under the Post Master General of the Punjab and North-Western Frontier Province Circle. This circle included the Punjab States with exception of Chamba, Jind, Nabha and Patiala which had their own postal arrangements. The province was divided into 18 postal divisions, each division was under the charge of a Superintendent. The inspectors were incharge of the Sub-divisions. The Post Master General was assisted by two postmasters and three personal assistants. Mail overseers were stationed at different places for supervisory work in their respective areas.

The runners and other Post Office servants belonged to the lower cadre. Above them were the postmen and the overseers, over them there was the clerical staff which looked after the clerical and the counter work. On the top were the deputy postmaster and postmaster category. All these categories inclusive of the post officers were classified as subordinate services and were mainly filled by native people, whereas the higher jobs or places were filled by the Europeans, but sometimes natives were also appointed. The post of the Superintendents of post office and above were filled by unconvenanted officers of post office or other department and by those belonging to the convenanted or Imperial service people. The Low Cadre people were trained properly and the working procedure was strictly imposed, the offenders were punished and penalties imposed. The authorities kept an Appointment and Character Book for maintaining their records. These punishments took the shape of statutory rules under section 241 of the Court of India Act 1935. Uniforms were given and the working hours fixed, holidays were sanctioned, leaves were granted, pensions were given and the workers were provided various other facilities. This all was planned by Mr. Horman in 1895 by the Time Test, which was regulated in 1898.⁷

For employing intelligent and trustworthy people, the government with the payment of extra allowance employed school teachers, shopkeepers and government pensioners. So, with the provision, even those areas were provided with postal facilities which were too poor to have one. The rate of progress in Punjab could be felt as the number of letters increased and the number of Post Offices increased from 120 in 1867-68 to 528 in 1874-75.⁸

7. Imperial Gazetteers of India: Punjab, Vol. I, p. 92; Administration Report 1921-22; Report of the Posts and Telegraphs Committee 1924-25; Dr. H. Noor Ahmed, *India Post Through Ages: A Saga of Communication*, Postal History Society India, Alur, n.d; pp 170-172; Public Works Department, Post Office, File No. 2, Dec. 1921.

8. Administration Report 1866-67, 1874-75, 1867-1875.

Year	Letters Delivered
1867-68	10,215,976
1868-69	10,872,719
1870-71	10,254,384
1871-72	10,618,363
1873-74	13,420,416
1874-75	14,141,972

The introduction of value payable system in 1877; the system of insurance of postal articles in 1878; post cards in 1879; money orders business in 1880; the post office saving bank in 1882 and the constitution in 1884 of the post office as receiving office for the reception of inland telegrams and the extension of increased facility of delivery by postmen, popularized the post offices even in mofussil areas. In July 1901 inland parcel postage was started, the rates were 2 *annas* for the first 20 *tolas*, 4 *annas* for 20 to 40 *tolas*. In 1906 District Post Offices were amalgamated into Imperial Post Office, which also led to an increase in the number of Post Offices. In 1924-25 the Directorate of the Post and Telegraph Department comprised of four distinct branches - Postal, Telegraph Traffic, Engineering and Wireless. An increase in the postal business, which was felt upto 1929-30 had to face a fall due to the economic crisis of 1930-35. But after 1934-35 an increase was again felt, especially in Punjab and North-Western Province Circles. Mobile Post Offices were also introduced in 1938-39 for the convenience of the Public.⁹

In rural areas more post offices were opened and in the urban areas their service was improved by increase in the number and size of post offices, all these were the post war development plans formulated after the second world war by the government. In 1946-47 due to communal disturbances, considerable dislocation of work took place, 8 postal officials were killed, 31 were injured and one went missing. Heavy absentees were felt, so, due to all this a number of post offices had to be closed. Above all with the mass migration these dislocations reached its climax. If compared in 1904-05 the average area per post office was around 780 sq. miles in North-Western Province, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh which went down to half in 1947.¹⁰

Big postal buildings were constructed in which the stationery was earlier purchased from the local market but in 1873 Postal Stock Depots were

9. Administration Report 1866-67, 1867-1875, 1934-35, 1938-39, Finance Department, September (Revenue), 'A' 1st to 3rd October 1877, p. 1 and 'A', 333-335 of June 1879, p.1; Parveen Lata 'Public Works in the Punjab 1901-1947' p. 47; Dr. H.Noor Ahmed, *India, Post Through Ages: A Saga of Communication*, p.51; Report of the postal Expert Committee 1934-35, pp. 72-74.

10. Dr. H. Noor Ahmed, *India Post Through Ages: A Saga of Communication*, pp. 53, 54, 55; Legislative Assembly Debates, Vol.III, 1947, 3rd Session, 10th March, 24th March 1947, pp. 2009-2010.

opened, which provided them the stationery. Now, the post offices were regarded as a source of revenue by the government.

Stamps were introduced on 1st July 1852 by Sir Bartle Frere, the Commissioner of Scinde (Karachi) called Scinde Dawk. With the centralization of the administration of the post service, the first adhesive paper postage stamp, a prepayment device was issued on all India basis on 1st October 1854. It was an unperforated and ungummed $\frac{1}{2}$ anna stamp with the queen's head in blue, designed and printed by the lithograph process at the Surveyor or General's office at Calcutta. After that many stamps came into use.¹¹

In 1854 not a single letter box was present but by 1874-75, there were 61811 letter boxes in the country and in Punjab 241 boxes in 1882, 435 in 1891, 57,321 in 1947 of which 40,011 were in rural areas and 17,310 were in urban areas.

In April 1880 measures were taken to pay the native military pensioners and by 1900-01 almost the whole of the provincial post offices took up this service. In 1903-04 there were 29,959 pensioners paid through post offices and the amount being Rs. 21 lakhs by 1935-36, the number rose to 1,36,323 and the amount to Rs. 85 lakh.

In April 1882 Post Office Saving Bank came into existence, the amount deposited was Rs.20 lakh and the interest received was Rs. 49,020. In 1903-04 amount rose to Rs. 1233 lakh and the interest came upto 35 lakh, this further rose to Rs.2674 lakh in 1946-47 with the increase in the interest to Rs. 75 lakh. The annual limit of current deposits in 1882 was Rs. 200/- and the maximum amount a depositor could have at his credit was Rs. 2,000/- with interest. The interest allowed was at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ anna per month on every complete sum of Rs. 6/-, it was equivalent to $3\frac{1}{8}$ percent per annum. But from July 1905 the rate of interest was reduced to 3 percent on deposit held at call but raised to $3\frac{1}{4}$ percent on deposits requiring 6 months notice of withdrawal. During the second world war Defence Savings Bank came up. In 1890 revenue money order system was introduced, which became popular in the 20th Century. The number of money orders issued were, 1,720 of the aggregate value of Rs.1.25 lakh, this number rose to 4 lakh and the amount rose to Rs.9950 lakh in 1945-46. The number of inland money orders in 1900-01 was 12,922 of the aggregate value of Rs.27 lakh. This number became 51,720 and the amount came upto Rs. 6 lakh in 1946. The system of sending Judicial Documents was started in 1892 in Ambala and Gurdaspur, but by 1900-01 it was extended to the whole districts. The number of court documents sent was 75,247 in 1900-01 and the income derived was Rs.13,439 in 1906-07 documents rose to 98,400 and the income derived became Rs. 34,576. Quinine, the anti-malaria drug, was also sold through the post offices. In the first half of the 20th Century the progress was as follows:-

11. Dr. H.Noor Ahmed, *India Post Through Ages: A Saga of Communication*, p. 279.

	Year 1900-01	Year 1946-47
Number of Post Offices and Letter Boxes	4,900	13,961
Total Number of Postal Articles Delivered	435(1891)	57,321
Letters	26,935,983	45,602,753
Postcards	31,430,787	8,96,561,266
Packets	3,159,862	6,378,445
Registered Newspapers	3,284,176	1,39,772,734
Value of money orders issued in Rs.	2,42,07,579	1,94,07,89,82
The amount of Saving Bank Deposits in Rs.	1,09,11,336	1,04,33,01,935 ¹²

The most important line of postal communication, not only in the Punjab, but whole of India was the Grand Trunk Road. Secondly, the line from Lahore to Multan. Thirdly, the line from Lahore running South-West and connecting the Central and Western districts, such as Shahpur, Jhang, Leia, Pind Dadan Khan and Dera Ismail Khan. The mail was carried in carts, drawn by two horses running eight mile per hour. In rainy season only the horses were used as the carts got stuck in the muddy tracks. The Government Bullock Train consisting of covered wagons drawn by bullocks were also used at a pace of three miles per hour for eight months, this to stopping in the rainy season. Then there were the postmen, who travelled at a speed of 4 miles per hour. Streamers were also used for postage purpose. The private and public servants, camels, bicycles, railway van's wheeled conveyance, all were used. Responsibility for providing security to the mail carriers was earlier in the hands of the Zamindars of the regions, but later on the government took up the responsibility.¹³

The history of the postal system of Punjab in a way was linked with the history of social, political, intellectual, commercial and economical developments. The conveyance of messages through letters, post cards, urgent letters, newspapers became possible. Messages could be sent to near and dear ones, no matter how far. Books, parcels/packets could be sent anywhere with full protection. Pensions could be easily received and money orders could be sent. The mail carriers carried passengers along with mails. The newspapers affected the process of national thought, understanding and unification. It imparted political education to the masses, which brought political consciousness in people. Government policies came in front of people and it also gave strong impetus to the national movement. They provided right news during the time of emergency, they being the voice of common man, protected and safeguarded their interests. In the social life they promoted regional interdependence and change in the social outlook. The behaviour/habits of the people underwent a change. They helped in eradicating the social evils and helped in providing aid during the time of spread of malaria.

12. Report on the Works of the Indian Posts and Telegraph Department 1935-36, 1946-47, Government of India Press, New Delhi 1937; Imperial Gazetteers of India: Punjab, Vol.III, pp. 436, 434; Vol.I p.92 Administration Report 1900-01.

13. Foreign Miscellaneous Series, Sr. No. 157 No. in list 364, para 107, 108, 109.

MADAN LAL DHINGRA : AN EVALUATION OF HIS MISSION

*Parminder Singh**

"I believe that a nation held down by foreign bayonets is in a perpetual state of war. Since open battle is rendered impossible to a disarmed man; I attacked by surprise, since guns were denied to me. I drew forth pistol and fired. Poor in health and intellect, a son like myself has nothing else to offer to the mother but his own blood. And so I have sacrificed the same on her altar. The only lesson required in India at present is to learn how to die, and the only way to teach it is by dying ourselves. My only prayer to God is that, I may be reborn of the same mother and I may re-die in the same sacred cause till the cause is successful, "Bande Matram".¹ These are the words of great martyr Madan Lal Dhillra who gave his sacrifice on 17th Aug., 1909 at Pantonvillie prison after killing Sir Col. Curzon Wylie, Political Aid De Camp, to the Secretary of State for India.

Madan Lal Dhillra belonged to a very highly respectable family and he was born on 18th Sept. 1883 in Amritsar. His father Sahib Ditta Mal was a reputed medical practitioner. He was the first Indian in Amritsar to own a car and he had six carriages driven by horses which were housed in *Bagghi Khana*, especially built for the purpose.² Sahib Ditta Mal had seven sons and a daughter. The eldest, Kundan Lal an eye specialist widely travelled was a flourishing businessman in textiles, Dr. Mohan Lal Dhillra, (M.D., F.R.C.S., M.R.C.P. from London) well known for his book on Physiology, was Chief Medical Officer in Jind State, the next, Dr. Behari Lal Dhillra was MD and MRCP from London. Chaman Lal was Barrister at Law from London remained official receiver to the court of insolvency at Amritsar in Punjab High Court and married to niece of the Maharani of Cooch, Bihar. Chuni Lal, another Barrister in the family, was Munsif in Jammu. Next was Madan Lal Dhillra. The last son of Ditta Mal was Bhajan Lal who was also doing the Bar-at-Law from London at that time. The only daughter of Ditta Mal was Kaki Rani. She was married to Chetan Dass of Sahiwal (Pakistan), a big landlord.³

Thus the Dhillra family, highly educated, widely travelled, cosmopolitan in out look, ambitious and fairly well connected with the

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1. *Trial Deposition of Madan Lal Dhillra*. Dhillra's Statement (NAI).

2. V.N. Datta, *Madan Lal Dhillra and the Revolutionary Movement*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 2.

3. B.S.Maigowalia, *The First Indian Martyr M.L.Dhillra*, Hoshiarpur, p. 50.

British official, hierarchy with a strong flair for professions like medicine, law and business, enjoyed a social position not only in Amritsar but whole Punjab.⁴

In spite of the bureaucracy, high status and well-wisher of Britishers, Madan Lal Dhingra chose the patriotic path. He passed his intermediate examination in IInd division from the Municipal College Amritsar and joined Govt. College Lahore. As a student in Lahore, he was influenced by the political struggle for Indian Independence led by Bal, Lal, Pal. At this time revolutionary activities in the institutions of Lahore and Amritsar were on the peak.⁵ Krishan Lal, Lala Duni Chand, Dr. Satpal, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Lala Hardayal, Sham Lal, Sohan Singh Pathak (Patti), Sukhdev, Teja Singh, etc. were studying in Lahore. All they were actively involved in anti British activities. Such atmosphere changed the whole life of M.L. Dhingra and he started to take part in revolutionary at Lahore. Due to this, he was expelled from College. After his expulsion, he stopped accepting help from his parents and began working with great dignity of labour, he joined Settlement Deptt. Punjab as a clerk, there he was treated badly by Englishmen and he began to hate Britishers.⁶ After he joined tonga driver in the company of Rai Bahadur Daulat Ram at Simla-Kalka Road. Soon he left this company due to some reason. Then he joined as a labourer in a factory, where he organized a trade union and was dismissed from his job. He went to his parent's house but was told that he was not welcome, owing to his political activities. He went to Bombay, worked as a Lascar, then came to London. Dhingra was dissuaded from remaining in London owing to its being expensive, and so he went back to India.⁷

Persuaded by his brother to do studies in higher education he came back to London and joined the University College London to study Mechanical Engineering. In London he came to contact with Krishna Verma and Vir Savarkar.⁸

At that time, India House, London, became the Chief Centre of the Indian Revolutionary activities. Madan Lal Dhingra became boarder at the India House for some time. He regularly attended the discussions and debates held by Savarkar's Free India Society, at the India House.⁹ At one of the meeting the subject of debate was: 'who is India's bitterest enemy'? While some speakers held, it was Lord Curzon, some others felt, Curzon was

4. Pritam Singh Saini, *Saheed Madan Lal Dhingra* (Punjabi), Punjabi University, Patiala, 1991.

5. P.C.Ghosh, *Indian National Congress*, Calcutta, 1960, pp. 4-5.

6. K.L.Malhotra, *Madan Lal Dhingra, Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by S.P. Sen, Calcutta, 1972, p. 459.

7. Sohan Singh Josh, *Bhagat Singh Nall Merian Mulakatan Te Char Hor Mudley Inqlabi* (Punjabi), Delhi, 1977, p. 100.

8. V.N. Datta. *M.L. Dhingra and the Revolutionary Movement*, New Delhi., 1978.

9. *Home Political Department* (Conf.) Report, File N. L./P+J/6/986.

really a friend, who had kicked Indians into wakefulness. Still other awarded the palm to Col. Sir William Curzon Wyllie, Political Aid De Camp at the Indian office to the Secretary of state for India, Lord Morley' who it was said, was swayed by Sir William into adopting a policy of unrestrained repression in India. Madan Lal unexpectedly intervened to observe that Curzon and Curzon Wyllie were two sides of a coin. He said that we need action and not words. India must have martyrs if our cause is to triumph.¹⁰

Madan Lal Dhingra made formed the resolution of sacrificing his life to the country in December, 1908. His feelings towards Britishers were intense. This was fed by the articles against Indians that used to appear in the English paper from time to time. Madan Lal Dhingra used to read over and over again these articles like "Coloured Men and English Women" which appeared in *London Opinion*, "Babu Black Sheep" in Cassell's weekly and various articles. These used to make him wild English men only understand force. He had various schemes for Indian's problem. He wanted to kill the largest number of English men indiscriminately.¹¹

His friend H.K. Koregaokar, member of India House, told that he had a scheme in his head of blowing up a P & O Steamer. He shared his ideas with Savarkar but Savarkar wanted firstly to kill Lord Curzon, and if not Curzon then Morley. Once Dhingra got a chance near the Savoy Hotel, when he saw Lord Curzon, but two photographers were standing very near. Curzon escaped almost miraculously.¹² Then Dhingra formed the idea of blowing up the House of Commons, that was also not possible. Then he thought of going to the house and shooting indiscriminately at the members from the gallery. But due to the violence, suffragettes, the gallery of the house was closed to visitors. Dhingra's ideal was Kanai Lal Dutt, who killed Narendra Nath Gossain in Alipur Jail. In London M.L. Dhingra and other members started a "Shakti Puja Samiti. Its main aim was to teach Jui Jitsu, boxing, wrestling and for teaching shooting. Dhingra was its President, Dass was Vice President and Koregokar was its Treasurer.¹³

Another plan of M.L. Dhingra and his friend J.D. Dass was to start a shooting club. They tried to arrange with certain English friends, but they were not willing. Ultimately idea finally given up. Dhingra and his friends joined shooting centre of Henry Stanton Morley at Tottenham, Court Road, London to practice there. In few months he became an expert in shot.¹⁴

Two incidents of 1909 seem to have determined Dhingra's future course of action. The first was a manifesto of the Polish Revolutionary Party, which advocated armed rising and terrorism as the historic and the

10. E.Jaiwant Paul and Shubh Paul, *Hardayal, the Great Revolutionary*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 64.

11. *Home Political Deptt. (Conf.) Report*, File No. L/P+J/6/982.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. E.Jaiwant Paul and Shubh Paul, *op.cit.*, p. 64.

only method for the attainment of freedom by a subject people.¹⁵ The Second was the arrest, conviction and transportation for life, on the 9th June, of Ganesh Damodar Savarkar, brother of his guru Vinayak Savarkar, at Nasik on a charge of abetment of war against the king. He had already taken the resolve, and had mixed in the society of high officials and retired bureaucrats through membership of Aristocratic Club in London with particular end in view and also joined the Indian National Association for the express purpose to know some important person.¹⁶ Madan Lal Dhingra judged that Col-Curzon Wyllie, Political Aid-De-Camp to Secretary of State of India for India is a dangerous man in anti revolutionary activities in England and India.

He knew that the British imperialists were aware of the revolutionary activities going on in India House and they created a rival institution of Indian students under the patronage of Sir Curzon Wyllie, a Scotland Yard Officer. Wyllie posed a two-fold danger to the Indian revolutionaries. He established a rival youth club in order to poison the minds of the Indian young men against the activities of revolutionaries. In addition, he spied on the activities of patriotically inclined students and kept the Secretary of state and the Government of India informed of prospective patriotic leaders. He also knew that Curzon Wyllie was arrogant, much too officious and by over bearing manners. He had caused offence to Indian students. His past record had aroused hostile feeling, for example, Wyllie had humiliated Krishan Verma when he was a resident of Udaipur.¹⁷ Time to time Veer Savarkar and Hardayal, active leaders of India House were targeted by Wyllie.¹⁸

Curzon Wyllie had very close relation with Dhingra's family and giving all information about revolutionary activities of M.L. Dhingra to his father and his brother Kundan Lal Dhingra. In response of his brother's letter Wyllie wrote Madan Lal Dhingra on 13 April 1909 to see him.¹⁹ Even Wyllie told Miss Emma Josephine Back, an Honorary Secretary of National Indian Association to write to Madan Lal Dhingra to meet him. Miss Back wrote to Dhingra on 5th May 1909 requesting to see Sir Curzon Wyllie.²⁰ So Dhingra has Judged that Wyllie will stop him from revolutionary path and he had began to feel strongly that he was being shadowed by the India Office authorities. He know that Wyllie's letter to Kundan Lal Dhingra must have disturbed the Dhingra family. It was natural, they will try to separate him from revolutionaries of India House.

15. Gauha, A.C., *The Story of Indian Revolution*, New Delhi, 1971, p. 95.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

17. Prem Singh Prem, *Kurbani De Punj (Part-II)* (Punjabi), Chandigarh, 1995, p. 37.

18. Dhananjay Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, Bombay, 1950, p. 49.

19. Govt. of India, Home Deptt., *Proceedings, Political A*, September, 1909, Nos. 66-68.

20. *Trial Deposition of Madan Lal Dhingra*, (N.A.I.) E.J. Beck to M.L.Dhingra, 5 May, 1909.

Ultimately Madan Lal Dhingra decided to Murder Curzon Wylie. In fact after his decision he was quite regular in May and June to practising on the range at Tolltenham shooting centre, right until the day when he killed Wylie. Though there was no fixed time for him to go to range. Sometimes he would reach there about 12 A.M or 1 P.M or in the evening about 5 P.M. as it suited him. But he kept his shooting practice a dead secret. Even his Land Lady Mary Haris and his brother who was in London knew nothing of these shooting practices.²¹

When M.L.Dhingra came to know that in the evening of July 1, 1909, Indian National Association is going to arrange a function at the Jahangir House of the Institute of Imperial Studies London, a large number of English men like Lord Curzon, Lord Morley and Curzon Wylie etc. are coming to attend this function. He decided with vigour, today will be the last function of the anti Indians. On 1st July, 1909, he did not go for study and spent most of this time in his lodging. He reached on shooting centre at 5:30 P.M. for practice and he had got the bull's eye eight times out of the twelve shots that he fired.²² Dhingra asked coach Morely to clear his pistol. After taking his pistol, he left the centre. In the evening, he was dressed in an English dark long suit and wore a blue turban, reached at the Jahangir house. When Lord Curzon and Lord Morley did not came to attend this function, he became upset, but soon he saw Sir Curzon Wylie entering the hall with his wife. Madan Lal greeted him and fired five shots right in his face. Wylie died without a shriek. Cowasji Lalkaka, a Parsee doctor, who tried to save Wylie also died of Madan Lal's sixth bullet, which he fired in self defence because Lalkaka caught hold of him. Madan Lal stated in the court that he had no intention to kill Lalkaka and it was just accidental. This was the first fire in London by the Indian revolutionary which was the clear indication for the Britishers that Indians are awakened.²³

When some one in the crowd called him a 'murderer' he objected and said he was a patriot working for the emancipation of his motherland from the alien yoke and I am perfectly justified in what I have done. Madan Lal made no effort to escape. He volunteered arrest.

Dhingra was taken to the Walton Street Police Station and searched. They found two pistols, one empty and one chamber loaded revolver, a dagger, a role of paper, a pen knife, a number of small slips of paper etc. They also searched his room from where they recovered original painting by a Russian painter Verastchagin, depicting the killing of the revolt of the 1857's revolutionaries at the hands of British soldiers, a photograph of Sir Curzon Wylie, on which is penciled 'Heathen Dog' and a photograph of

21. V.N. Dutta, *op.cit.*, p. 53.

22. E.Jaiwant Paul and Shubh Paul, *op.cit.*, p. 64.

23. *Ibid.*

Tarak Nath Dass exiled revolutionary²⁴ and a photograph of British Parliament hanging up side down. He was charged with the murder and sent to Brixton Prison. Veer Savarkar suggested engaging a barrister but Dhingra refused.²⁵ Most glorious moment was the trial at old Bailey on 10th July 1909, when the British Magistrate asked him whether he wanted to say something about murder. Madan Lal Dhingra gave his statement, "I do not want to say anything in defence but simply to prove the justification of my deed. As for myself I do not think any English law court has any authority to convict me or detain me in prison or to pass any sentence to me. And I maintain that if it is patriotic for any Englishman to fight against the Germans, if they were to occupy this country, it is much more justifiable and patriotic in my case to fight against the English. I hold the English people responsible for the murder of eight million of my country men in the last 50 years. And they are also responsible for taking away 100 million pounds every year from India to this country. I also hold him responsible for the hanging and deportation of thousands of my countrymen."²⁶

Madan Lal was tried in old Bailey court on July 23, 1909. The decision of sentence him to death was taken in less than 20 minutes, it was a shortest trial in history of English Judiciary. When the Judge announced his Judgement, he raised his voice and said, "I am proud to have the honour of laying down my life for my country. But remember, we shall have our time in the days to come."²⁷

The Irish press hailed Madan Lal Dhingra as a hero. So did the Egyptian paper published from Cairo, *La Patrie Egyptienne*. Mrs. Annie-Besant said, "more Madan Lals are the need of the time". Another revolutionary Virendra Nath Chattopadhyaya started a monthly magazine in his memory, named "*Madan Talwar*" from German, and printed by Madam Cama... Soon it became a mouth-piece of all revolutionaries abroad.²⁸ "*Bande Matram*" 10 Sept. 1909 wrote about Dhingra that he is immortal who with his words and acts will live for centuries. Shamaji Krishna Verma, leader of the revolutionaries in England and France also released his statement in *The Times London*, "Although I have absolutely no connection with the assassination, I frankly admit that I approve of the deed and regard the author as a martyr in the case of Indian Independence. I know the declaration will shock many, but luckily there are even in England high minded publicists who agree with me, the political assassination is not murder."²⁹ Victor Grayson who remained socialist M.P. in 1907-10, in his speech said that I had

24. Dharamvira, *Lala Hardayal*, New Delhi, 1970, p. 119.

25. Pritam Saini, *Saheed Madan Lal Dhingra*, (Punjabi), Pbi. Univ. Patiala, 1991, p. 41.

26. *Trial Deposttion of Madan Lal Dhingra* (NAI), Dhingra's Statement.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Dharamvira, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

29. *The Times*, London, 17 July, 1909.

seen a portrait of the murderer of Wyllie, whom they called an assassin, but I asked to them why not put Lord Morley in and say another assassin. He did not condone the act, but extended his sympathy to the poor Indians, mad and exasperated by the horrors endured by his people.³⁰ Mr. V.S. Blunt, another M.P. of England Stated, "No Christian martyr even faced his judges with greater dignity than Dhingra". He wrote, if India could produce five hundred men as absolutely without fear as Dhingra, She could achieve freedom, and he also wrote that even Liod George king of England expressed to Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of England his highest admiration of Dhingra's attitude as patriot. Churchill shared the same views and they compared Dhingra with Plutarch's immortal heroes.³¹

Lala Hardayal, founder of the Ghadar Party said, Dhingra reminded me of the medieval Rajputs and the Sikhs who loved death like a bride whose bride-groom comes to take her away. England thinks, She killed Dhingra but in reality he lives forever and has indeed given the death blow to the English Sovereignty in India.

So Dhingra was the first youth leader of India, who kissed the gallows with a smile on his face. His last wish was; "May I be reborn to the same mother, and may I re- die in the same sacred cause, till the cause is successful". He was a tria blazer of the freedom struggle of India who inspired Ghadarites, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Chander Sekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chander Bose, Udham Singh etc. After Dhingra's act of bravery number of murders for Patriotic cause, committed with political motives since 1909, are- 8 in 1909, 2 in 1910, 8 in 1911, 3 in 1912, 5 in 1913, 4 in 1914, 22 in 1915, 9 in 1916 and 7 upto June 1917.³²

An American State lawyer's opinion is fully relevant about Dhingra's act. He said, "Five years ago nobody dared to speak or write anything oppressive against the British Raj, but the time is changed, people are boldly declaring their right to over-throw the foreign Yoke by any means what so ever, some use the bomb, some use the revolver, some attempt to blow up trains and "so on" Indians who are friendly with the British Govt. or its agents are denounced as the most wretched and contemptible of traitors.³³ So in the end, it is concluded that the morning of the 17th August 1909 will remain engraved in red letters in the heart of every Indian who loved his mother land. This is the morning that our great patriot, our beloved Dhingra, is swinging to and fro with his sacred neck in the grip of execution ropes in Pentonville prison. This great patriot is no more with us in his earthy body, but in spirit he is with us, will remain with us, will guide us in the battle of the freedom of the mother land, and his name written in the history of India, will go down to posterity.³⁴

30. Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India*, London, 1966, p. 194.

31. V.S. Blunt, *My Diaries*, Part-II, p. 288.

32. J.C. Ker, *Political Trouble in India*, Delhi, 1972.

33. *Government of India, Home Department (Political)*, September, 1911, No. 4

34. Gauha, A.C., *op.cit.*, p. 98.

LETTERS OF UDHAM SINGH : ISSUES AND PERSONALITY

*Navtej Singh**

Udham Singh (actual name Sher Singh) was arrested on 13 March 1940 at Caxton Hall, London after the incident of shooting in which he killed Sir Michael O'Dwyer, former Lt. Governor of Punjab and wounded Lord Zetland, Lord Lamington and Sir Louis Dane.¹ He was taken to Cannon Row police station at London. On 14 March he was taken to Bow Street Magistrate's Court and was remanded in custody for seven days to Brixton prison on the charge which read as follows:

Mohamed Singh Azad, 37, Indian, Engineer living at 8 Mornington Terrace, N.W. was charged with feloniously murdering Sir Michael O'Dwyer, 75 years old, who was shot through the heart in front of a crowded meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster.²

During the trial he was kept in Brixton prison from 14 March to 5 June, the day of judgement and on 5 June after the trial ended he was taken to Pentonville prison in the north London.³ During his stay at Brixton, he wrote 12 letters including one smuggled out, at Pentonville one letter and one letter was found by the police in his room. Thus there are total 14 letters of Udham Singh.⁴

In this paper attempt has been made to understand concerns of Udham Singh or the issues he had been engaged during his prison time and also the reflections on his personality that emerges from the writings of these 14 letters.

The very first letter available written by Udham Singh has been dated as 11 February or March 1940 before his arrest. Probably it was written on 11 March because the police picked it up from his room while searching after arrest. It is addressed to some very close friend in New York (could be some Ghadr Party activist). Directed to some Kumari and mentions to have close intimation with her as he was in receipt of her recent letter from New York. Further, he has been in correspondence with her and

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1. For detail, see, Navtej Singh, *Challenge to Imperial Hegemony: The Life Story of A Great Indian Patriot Udham Singh*, Patiala, 1998; *Emergence of the Image: Redact Documents of Udham Singh*, New Delhi, 2002; and J.S. Grewal and H.K. Puri, *Letters of Udham Singh*, Amritsar, 1974.

2. *Morning Advertiser*, 15 March 1940.

3. Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 182-83.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

writes that it was his last letter because he was expecting his end of life. He asks her to give information about this to his friends (party activists) in India. He further refers that since he used to tell her that their next meeting would be impossible as he was going to accomplish his work and ultimately was sure to be arrested. He has made up his mind. He did not share his mission but writes that it will be known to her. He laments that he won't be able to fulfill his mission of seeing India's freedom but expects freedom of country very soon. Since he had travelled much and there was no interest in living further. He asks about some money that was to be given to someone in India.⁵

In the first letter from Brixton prison on 15 March 1940 Udham Singh attempts to establish contact with Shiv Singh Jouhl. He gave his own name as Mohamed Singh Azad and addressed his friend as 'Mr. Singh Sahib'. He asked for books on history in a seemingly casual way. He also mentions that he would be shifted from here to some 'better castle', means the condemned cell. He asks for some Urdu or Gurmukhi books. He was not interested in religious books and points out that his security was tight. He speaks about his near death and the desire to be reborn. He tries to emphasise the kind of books he needed.⁶

On 16 March Udham Singh addressed Mr. Sands, Police Superintendent to ask for certain of his property, including a shirt, shoes, turbans etc., and he refused to appear in the court in any name other than Mohamed Singh Azad, in which name he stressed he had been known all over the world.⁷ Within a few days Udham Singh received some books and on 20 March he wrote to Shiv Singh again, thanking for the books and indicating the almost certain result of his trial. He mentions about the Christian priest who comes everyday to preach him Christianity. But he viewed it as sheer wastage of time because he was not going to change religion. He had asked for *Quran Sharif* from the local mosque but indirectly hints at something else to be smuggled in. He desired that priests were allowed to see those who were detained in the prison ; suggesting that there was the possibility of a personal meeting between himself and Shiv Singh who, as the secretary of the 'Khalsa Jatha' could be regarded as 'a priest'.⁸

On 21 March Udham Singh addressed a letter to 'Granthi Sahib, Sikh temple, Stockton, California' (Headquarter of the Ghadr Party) mentioning as 'Dear Friend', telling him that all those who knew him should forget about him as his life was short. He also referred to his 'female friend' and advised her to sell the property and requested the 'Granthi' to forward

5. File No. HO 144/21445, Public Office Record Number 37513, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 261-62.

6. Quoted in J.S. Grewal and H.K. Puri, *op.cit.*, pp. 53-56.

7. Letter dated 16 March 1940, File No. MEPO 3/1743, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 268-69.

8. J.S. Grewal and H.K. Puri, *op.cit.*, pp. 58-63.

this letter to one Dr. Rai.⁹ Obviously this is his first letter to establish contact with Ghadr Party at California after his arrest. He gives indication of the plan he had made with some of the Ghadr activists.

On 25 March he sent a letter mailed to the 'Priest' of the Sikh Temple of Stockton but intended for one 'Miss Kumari', Berkley University, near Oakland, California. In the letter he lamented losing her address but intimated that she would receive his letter written to Dr. Roy (or Rai). He advised her to sell his property and expressed his desire to be with her. But being in prison on a murder charge, he was helpless. He remembered the time they had spent together. He stated that he would be dead by the time she received his letter, though he passionately wanted to see her.¹⁰

The letter written in passionate terming, expressed his great love for her. It ran: "I am waiting for trail (trial). It might be 22nd or 25th April and soon you will be free girl again. Hope you enjoy your best of life and sincerely I am telling you, you must believe me this time, I thought I could see you once again in my life but how we can—you are thousands of miles away. I might be dead before you get this letter. I know I am getting married very soon with thick rope and engagement could not be happy one for both of us. Dear, you will remain in my heart till my end comes. I love you and shall go on loving you for eternity".¹¹

On 30 March, perhaps disappointed is not having his request complied with, he dispatched another letter to Shiv Singh as 'Dear Mr. Johal Singh', which amounted to telling him that he was an ignoramus fool not to have understood the point. He knew that many of Indians living in England were against him, but some Punjabis were collecting money for his defence. Udham Singh told Shiv Singh not to bother about him for he was waiting for his marriage with 'death'. He was looking forward to meeting his idol Bhagat Singh after his death: 'It is since 10 years when my best friend has left me behind and I am sure after my death I will see him as he is waiting for me, it was 23rd and I hope they will hang me on the same date as he was'. He did ask for a prayer book again, and it is not certain that this prayer book did not mean something quite different from what the word ordinarily conveys.¹²

Frustrated by his inability to communicate with Singh by ordinary post, Udham Singh succeeded in smuggling out a letter from prison, post marked dated 3 April 1940. The first sixteen lines were written in English, obviously intended to deceive the person who posted it. In fact, the body of the letter proved this to be so; for example, no such person as 'Mr. Mitra' existed; it only means Mitter= Friend. The remainder of the letter was in Urdu and gave precise instructions regarding the purchase of a hack-saw, to

9. File No. HO 144/21445, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, p.276.

10. File No. HO 144/21445, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 277-78.

11. *Ibid.*

12. J.S. Grewal and H.K. Puri, *op.cit.*, pp. 64-67.

be secreted in the binding of a book and sent out into the jail as an ordinary parcel.¹³

The letter ran: 'I am not afraid to die. Still it is my duty to make an effort... if this succeeds my life is saved and I can hope to do other work which remains. But my life is in your hands, it is up to you to save it or destroy it. If I am successful then these wicked *gore* (whites) will have good cause to remember us Indians. Now, there remains for me one very big job which I alone can do... you are my teacher, so it is not right that I should write any more...If you get this message the whole world is mine. I shall have no difficulty in escaping from here....I can also go to America. Bhai Sahib is about to do this. I fancy that I shall put up a bit of a show, and I am not afraid to die'.¹⁴

The letter made it clear that the addressee of this letter was a close friend of Udhham Singh and possibly his only close friend. His name was given as 'Singh'. R. Sharman was, of course, R.S. Sharma, a former associate of Udhham Singh. The letter was intended either for him or for some Sikh to whom he was to deliver it.¹⁵

In the meantime Udhham Singh wrote a letter to a police official and asked for a pair of trousers and a pair of shoes which were in his room. Udhham Singh also stated in his letter that he would like to see Michael Coyle (Aid to C.I.D.) who was born in India and had lived there.¹⁶ On 5 April Udhham Singh wrote another letter believed to be addressed to Mr. Patel, in which he asked Patel to inform his previous solicitor that his services were no longer required; he also asked Patel to instead instruct Clayton. In the same letter Udhham Singh anticipates his death by hanging and expresses a desire for death by lynching in some street. He also mentions his best friend who had left him ten years earlier (Shaheed Bhagat Singh).¹⁷

The letter continued: '....I am waiting for the time to come and will take it very gladly.... I have seen in 5 years when I was in prison more than hundreds hanged since that I thought I would be the happiest if I met this sort of death...In India we have black sweepers but in this country white faces nice looking kind hearted (.) But they takes (take) life just the same....today is Sunday. I will go to Church and pray before my Lord Jesus to get me a half bottle of whisky after singing in the Church, they don't give anything in Church, you have to ask for so I will ask for drink. I am belong to royal family's you know well—so in England I am just the same a guest of

13. *Secret Letter*, dated 18 May 1940, *File No. P and J (S) 466/36*, No.1185, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, p.169.

14. *File No. P and J (S) 466/36*, No.874, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 284-86.

15. Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, p. 169.

16. *File No. MEPO 3/1743*, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, p.288.

17. *Minutes*, dated 8 April 1940, *File No. P.Com 9/872*, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, p.171.

Royal Family. There Lord Jesus was hanged so I say only the good peoples get away with that life. Some says they still can see him after so many hundred years....I can't. Then I only say they are nothing but lie and Mr. God I have been all over the world I never could find that oldman. If I die only ambition...even though I die my greatest wish has not been fulfilled to see my country free again. But I will be assured that my peoples will be free once again in the near future. Friends called me everything under the sun to whom could I say when my dear friend the only I made friend had left me behind. I can't what like to say and never have told anyone in my life. But after him not worth living. He were hanged and left the best friend behind. So I like to die the same way he died. But he was hanged in the night, I might be in the morning. But in the court I will request to be lynched in the street as they do in India'.¹⁸

On 6 April Udham Singh wrote to the 'Secretary Khalsa Jatha', that he was still looking forward to the books needed. Furthermore, he asked for *Hir Waris Shah*, one book on which he could take oath. He was ready to die for his love; only he did not love a person but an entire country of millions of persons.¹⁹ By 14 April no books were allowed to Udham Singh. The Governor of the prison was 'getting tough' with Udham Singh being allowed to take bath only once every 10 days. He closed the letter with a kind of threat to the governor: I will ask in court if the books were prohibited in the prison'.²⁰ This is the first letter where he puts his signature under the name: Udham Singh. In all earlier letters it is Mohamed Singh Azad or MSA; once Bava.

By 20 May Shiv Singh was not able to see Udham Singh. 'Do you think you could find time to come to see before I go to old Bailey, as after the trial I may not be able to see you', wrote Udham Singh to his friend on 20 May.²¹ His last letter is from Pentonville dated 7 June 1940, in which he requests Shiv Singh to send him *Gutka* (Sikh prayer book).²² In these two letters he is MS. Azad and Mohamed Singh Azad.

Thus during his stay in two different prisons Brixton and Pentonville for about 140 days from 14 March to 31 July 1940 he wrote maximum letters from Brixton. The main issues around which he remained engaged and are reflected in writings of his letters are that from the very beginning he was keen to establish contacts both with his friends in England and in USA including the Ghadr Party headquarters at Stockton, California. He was continuously in correspondence with Ghadr headquarters only giving hints about his mission. That he wanted to convey the party members

18. File No. PCOM, 9/872, quoted in Navtej Singh, *op.cit.*, pp. 289-90.

19. J.S. Grewal and H.K. Puri, *op.cit.*, p. 43.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-75.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

about his future which was surely the ultimate end of his life and at the same time shares his intense feelings to some very intimate female friend.

Secondly, in England from the beginning he has been asking for books in order to pass time in the jail, but more significantly 'something else' by giving hints. Ultimately it comes out to be hacksaw that would enable him to escape from prison so that he could fulfil his unfinished agenda. But unfortunately Shiv Singh failed to get his point. Moreover the smuggled out letter was intercepted by the police. He being unaware of this truth went on demanding for the same and ultimately asked Shiv Singh to visit him personally.

So far his personality is concerned, reflections suggest that he is fearless, never afraid of death, great influence of both Ghadr Party and Bhagat Singh. His activities and style completely emulate both. He has the sense of getting cooperation from the prison officials, by nature satirical and makes fun of the Christian God, very romantic and passionate to opposite sex and above all visionary. He clearly understands attitude of different sections of Indians living in England, yet keen to fulfil his mission. He desires to be reborn to do more activities to make country free. His fight is against British imperialism. He puts emphasis on Mohamed Singh Azad, only once he used his name as Udham Singh. Nowhere he wrote the word 'Ram' as pre-fix to Mohamed Singh Azad. In sum, the personality of Udham Singh reflects both as a dedicated revolutionary who had clarity of mind and mission, aware of the outcome and visionary; and as human being well travelled, passionate and very romantic who could challenge both death and British imperialism.

MOBILIZING HUMAN RESOURCE FOR WORLD WAR- I: A CASE STUDY OF HARYANA

Atul Yadav*

Whenever Britain was at war, India in some sense was also at war. While Indian soldiers had been sent overseas before 1914 for imperial purpose, these had been for minor tasks seldom involving actual warfare and never involving any significant portion of the Indian army. The main purpose of the Indian army had been to assure civil peace within India and protect India's frontiers.

After the Russian scare of 1885, in a series of major reforms the entire base of recruitment was transformed from a "territorial" to a "racial" and 'caste' basis. First, the system of linked battalions was revived. One battalion of a group was equipped for war, while other battalions supplied it with recruits.¹ The recruitment of many classes was terminated, for example between 1892 and 1914 the Mahars, Bengalis, many classes of Brahmins, Gujars, Ahirs and Hindustani Muslims were no longer recruited or their recruitment was drastically reduced in numbers. However, the First World War changed the whole scenario.

The First World War is a very important chapter in the history of the Indian army. The Indian Army played a significant part in various theatres of the war viz. Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It was also during this period that the Indian Army underwent considerable changes which had great impact on its subsequent history. Britain had at the time of World War-I only a modest army. It was therefore inevitable for Britain to immediately and continuously call upon the relatively large Indian Army. The role of Indian Army was significant in the victory of the allies. The insatiable demand of the First World War for manpower made it inevitable to change the recruiting policy. Classes which had been dropped from the recruiting lists, were again recruited. So much so that several new classes which had never been considered earlier, were also recruited.

Since India was deeply involved in the World War-I, the war produced and accelerated changes in the Indian society. Haryana also did not remain aloof. Here several questions viz. why Haryana contributed a large number of recruits? What it gained from the war? How people's life was impacted by the war? need answers. In this paper, I will try to find answers to

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1. Cohen Stephen P., *The Indian Army: its Contributions To The Development Of a Nation*, (New Delhi, 1990), p.41; *Recruiting in India Before and During The War of 1914-18* (India Army H.Qs. October 1919), p.5.

these and other queries.

Punjab was one of the major sectors which supplied recruits during the First World War. During the war period Haryana was not a separate state. In 1900, territorially the Haryana region almost corresponded to the Ambala Division of Punjab.² It consisted of the British Territories and the Native States. The British Territories comprised districts of Ambala, Karnal, Gurgaon, Rohtak and Hissar, while the Native States were Pataudi, Dujana, Loharu and parts of Patiala and Nabha. The share of Haryana in recruitment was therefore, also significant.

The outbreak of World War-I and Britain joining it sent a thrill of enthusiasm all over the Punjab including Haryana.³ The excitement expressed itself in the form of display of loyalty towards the British Raj.⁴ and prayed for victory to their arms. Political and social organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha and Congress on behalf of the Hindus, the Anjuman-i-Islamia and Muslim League on behalf of the Muslims, the *Chief Khalsa Diwan* on behalf of the Sikhs and many community organizations vied with one another in passing resolutions of loyalty.⁵

The spectrum of the Haryanvi loyalty, almost the reflection of the Indian loyalty in general, thus, had a wide range of colours starting from spiritual on the one end to political on the other. Thus each section of the population had his own axe to grind by expressing loyalty and support to the Govt. when it needed them the most and every one was excited because he saw in the outbreak of the war an excellent opportunity to further his interests.⁶

At Lahore, the capital of Punjab, a massive meeting was convened jointly by Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis on August 8, 1914. The meeting prayed for "the complete victory of British Arms"⁷ and resolved to make any and all sacrifices for the defence and glory of the British Empire and render the Government whatever service may be required of them. The Punjab *Hindu Mahasabha*, of which Rai Bahadur Balbir Singh of Rampura (Rewari) Haryana, was a prominent leader, on August 9, 1914 in a public meeting "begged to assure the Govt. of its steadfast loyalty to the person and throne of his gracious Majesty King Emperor George-V".⁸

The Punjab Chief's Association, including those of Haryana, in a meeting held at Shimla on August 9, unanimously decided to place all their belongings inclusive of personal services, at the disposal of the

2. Ambala division was formed in 1890 with six districts and six native states.

3. Govt. of India-Home-Pol-A-September, 1914-Pro-No.-270.

4. Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies, 1914-15, p.1.

5. Raja Ram, 'Impact of the First World War on the Punjab', *Punjab History Conference, Proceedings*, 10th Session, Patiala, pp. 190-197.

6. Raja Ram, 'Impact of the First World War on the Punjab,' Ph.D. Thesis, Panjab University, (Chandigarh), 1972, p. 34.

7. *The Tribune*, August 9, 1914, p. 7.

8. *The Tribune*, August 11, 1914, p. 1.

Government.⁹ They said that there would be no greater honour for them than to shed their blood in service of their Emperor. The readiness with which the large States—Patiala, Jind, Kapurthala etc. equipped their Imperial Service Troops for war got approbation from all quarters.¹⁰

At Amritsar on 10th August the *Chief Khalsa Diwan* and Sardar Bahadur Arur Singh, the manager of the Golden Temple, arranged public meeting and *Akhand Paths* to express the loyal sentiments of the people. Prayers were made to *Akal Purakh* during the *Ardasas* that he may make the British government ever successful and the Union Jack Victorious in the European crisis.¹¹ Sardar Arur Singh went to the extent of declaring that the Sikhs "Firmly believe that their 9th Guru had long predicted the advent of the English august rulers over the vast Indian Empire". Hence it was their bounden duty to preserve it whole-heartedly by helping the British.¹²

Even the Sikhs in the Punjab, who had some grievances against the Govt. at that time and were in an agitational mood, voluntarily decided to suspend all political agitations in order to avoid embarrassing the Govt.¹³ A joint public meeting of all the sects of Mohammedans of Lahore was held on 16th August to affirm their faith in the righteousness of the British cause and to express their satisfaction at the declaration of neutrality by Turkey and Afganistan in the then European crisis.¹⁴

A great Hindu religious fair held at Thanesar (Kurukshetra) towards the end of third week of August 1914 in connection with the Solar Eclipse illustrates the point. Thousands of Hindu devotees had collected there from far and near. The Maharaja of Darbhanga, a staunch Hindu, was also there on his pilgrimage to the Holy City of ancient saints and sages. The Hindus taking advantage of the large gathering, held a large meeting on 21 August at Thanesar under the presidentship of this Maharaja to give vent to the loyalty of the Hindu community to the British. In his presidential remarks the Maharaja of Darbhanga characterized the action of Germany in leading Europe to war as unrighteous and predicted doubtless victory for Great Britain. He emphasized that the entire Hindu Community was ready to sacrifice all that it possessed for the sake of the war.¹⁵

Even the Arya Samaj which had a popular following in Haryana and a quarter from which the Government did not expect any support, came out with the loyal sentiments for the British Govt. which resulted in the enthusiasm with which its followers subsequently rushed to the recruiting

9. *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, August 12, 1914, p. 6; *The Pioneer*, August 15, 1914, p. 7.

10. Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies, 1914-15, p. 1.

11. *The Tribune*, August 16, 1914, p. 4.

12. *The Tribune*, September 15, 1914, p. 7.

13. *The Bengalee*, August 13, 1914, p. 2.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

15. *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, August 22, 1914, p. 8; *The Pioneer*, August 23, 1914, p. 6.

office at Rohtak in 1915.¹⁶

The assurance of Congress stalwarts to the British public that "India stands firm in support of His Majesty's Govt. (as she is) convinced that future welfare of the Indian people is bound with the welfare of the British people."¹⁷ The feeling of loyalty towards the British were further reflected during the meeting of the Punjab Legislative Council held at Shimla on September 19, 1914 in which member after member vied with each other to assure the Govt. that they would not fail to perform their duty in the titanic struggle in which the Empire was, then, involved.¹⁸ Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan of Kunjpura (Karnal, Haryana) referred to the unlimited enthusiasm, the war had created and appealed to the Govt. to make use of it. He added, "with thousands of our young brave men in the theatre of war, we are not satisfied, and feel that we have to do more".¹⁹ Lala Lajpat Rai's pleadings to the British as well as to the Indians that "It is an occasion for proving that British rule in India does not rest on the British sword but on the British Principles",²⁰

Sir Michal O'Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, described the response of the Punjabis (including Haryanavis) to the Viceroy's proclamation of the war in a private letter of 12 August 1914 to Hardinge as "almost embarrassing".²¹ In fact the demonstration of loyalty on the part of people was so instantaneous, dazzling, overwhelming and beyond expectations that for some time the Govt. of India itself was in a fix and could not decide how to harness the mass enthusiasm into proper channels.

The Punjab (including Haryana) entered the war, thus with great excitement and an outburst of splendid loyalty to the British Govt. There were many reasons for the spontaneous display of loyalty to the British Crown by the masses of Haryana and leaders of India. Since Haryana was mostly rural and the main vocation of the people was agriculture, the Britishers were popular because of the Punjab Alienation Land Act of 1900.²² This had bestowed not only economic benefits but even social

16. *The Tribune*, August 17, 1914; Leigh M.S., *The Punjab and the War* (Lahore, 1922), p.45.

17. *The Tribune*, September 10, 1914, p.1; Joint statement issued by the members of Congress Deputation in London.

18. Punjab Legislative Council Debate, September 19, 1914, p.129.

19. *Ibid.*, p.153.

20. *The Tribune*, October 13, 1914, p.2.

21. Hardinge Papers, Vol.88, No.122, O'Dwyer to Hardinge, August 12, 1914.

22. Punjab Administration Report 1901-1902, p.37. (The Act proposed a 15 years limitation upon all mortgages. After the lapse of the period, the mortgages must be cancelled. The second object of the Act was the cancellation of the Zamindar's right to sale his land. It established three categories of sale- permanent alienation of agricultural land to non-agriculturists be permitted only with the permission of the Collector, sale among all agricultural tribes be permitted and the lease of land should run from a maximum period of 20 years or the life span of the leaser whichever was less. It also suggested that the law should apply to the entire province but the local Govt. be given the right to exempt areas and persons from its operation).

distinctions upon them. The security of their land tenure was the primary concern, and they believed that their interest in the ancestral land and opportunity could remain safe only under the British Raj. Also owing to their martial traditions and the material benefits of military service having been realized, the peasantry fell for the opportunity that the war had offered them to win laurels on the battle fields.²³

The big land lords and *Zamindars* unlike the peasantry were loyal to the Govt. not because of sentimental attachment but more for vested interests. Help to the Govt. could win for them more favours in return of their services. The business community equally proffered their loyalty since it was profitable for them to be on the right side of the Govt. Britain's defeat could well mean their economic ruin. Their interests bound them to the future destiny of Britain.²⁴

The Chiefs and Rulers were at the mercy of the Britishers in India. They realized that in order to maintain their ancestral glory intact and to win favours, it was necessary to offer everything to the Britishers and cling to them as steadfastly as they could. Hardly 10% of the population was literate, 1% having received English education.²⁵ Majority of these educated persons were in Govt. services and because of their professions they were ultra loyalists.

Prior to 1914, the recruitment in the Indian Army was based on the martial races theory but during 1914-1916, the recruitment was made partly by direct enlistment (whereby a young man whose family was connected with a certain Regiment could present himself as a recruit at the Regimental Depots) and partly by class recruiting which meant recruiting by recruiting officers who were posted at different Cantonments with a view to enrolling recruits of a particular class in Punjab including Haryana. From August 14, 1914 to March 31, 1916 a total number of 64,519 men were forthcoming from British Districts alone, 13048 coming from the region now comprising Haryana (See Table-1). This system of recruiting continued and recruiting went on steadily and there were no serious complaints of shortage of man power. It is clear that the districts with old military connections did best. Rohtak gave more than 5,000 and Gurgaon sent more than 3,000 recruits.

Because of more manpower recruitment, to augment recruitment a new system was introduced in 1917 whence the 'class system' of recruitment was replaced by the 'territorial system' of recruitment. In this system a Divisional Recruitment Officer, and to each suitable district a Divisional Assistant Recruitment Officer, was appointed to make intensive efforts to recruit men from the areas under their command. All over India 75 new

23. Govt. of India-Home-Pol-Deposit-August, 1914-Pro. No.1, Para 19.

24. Raja Ram, 'Impact of the First World War on the Punjab', Ph.D. Thesis...p. 32.

25. Fortnight Report on Punjab, ending 13 July, 1918.

classes (21 in Punjab)²⁶ were declared eligible for recruitment in the Army. Recruitment from the four Native States—Jind, Pataudi, Loharu and Dujana was also started. Still recruitment was restricted to the agriculturist communities. This was quite beneficial and 29,733 men were added from Punjab including 8,504 from Haryana alone from January 1, 1917 to June 30, 1917.²⁷ Even this, however, was not considered enough. In the middle of the year it was decided to hand over the control of recruitment to the civil authorities. The Provincial Recruitment Board was formed to popularize the attraction of the youth towards Army. Each district was given 'quota' up to which it was exhorted to work.²⁸ All persons holding positions of the privilege under the Govt. were called upon to assist. The responsibility of *Zaildars Inamdars* and *Lambardars* for intensive recruitment was explicitly affirmed by an amendment of the Land Revenue Rules.²⁹ The improvement in results achieved was remarkable: while Punjab contributed 61,716 men from July 1, 1917 to December 31, 1917, Haryana provided 15,489 recruits. Hissar which had contributed 4233 men up to 30 June, 1917 provided 4589 men during the next six months and even Karnal touched the 1500 mark.³⁰

The intensive effort of the Govt. of applying more pressure than persuasion, succeeded in enrolling a large number of recruits as described above, but alienated the sympathy of the masses. By the beginning of the year 1918 the strain resulting from intensive recruitment was producing general feeling of tiredness and there had begun to appear signs of acute tension. A number of regrettable incidents were reported from several places viz. Hoshiarpur, Seikhupura³¹ as also from Hissar district where messengers of recruiting officers were killed by villagers.³² In Gurgaon, a Subedar was murdered for helping in the recruitment of Meos.³³ In April 1918 a war conference was called by the Viceroy to increase the recruitment. As a result from June 1, 1918 to November 30, 1918 Punjab contributed 88,413 men including 18,707 from Haryana.³⁴

In addition to the civil authorities, the rural elite played a leading role in the recruitment drive in Haryana. The role of Rao Bahadur Ch. Lal

26. Adjutant General in India To GOC Egypt. War Diary No.90,653, Appx.33-Egypt, Vol.42. Dated November 10, 1918, available at History Division, Ministry of Defence, New Delhi. (Arians, Baltis, Bauria Sikhs, Bishnois, Gaur Brahmins, Dogra Jats, Heris, Hindu Aroras, Jagirdars of Ambala, Kambohs, Kanets, Mahatam Sikhs, Mussallis, Niazi Pathans, Punjabi Brahmins, Punjabi Hindus, Punjabi Christians, Pathans of Chhach, Rors, Sainis, S.W.Punjabi Musalmans).

27. See Leigh M.S., *op.cit.*

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

29. Pearay Mohan; *An Imaginary Rebellion and How it was Suppressed*, p.30; C.S.C.R., Vol.1, pp. 16-22.

30. Leigh M.S. *op.cit.*, pp. 35-36.

31. Govt. of India-Home-Pol-Deposit-April, 1917-Pro.No.60, p.12.

32. *Ibid.*, January, 1918-Pro No.59, p.14.

33. *Ibid.*, September, 1918-Pro. No.59.

34. Leigh M.S., *op.cit.*, pp. 35-36.

Chand and Rai Sahib Ch. Chhotu Ram, Pleaders in Rohtak and Rai Bahadur Balbir Singh in Gurgaon was outstanding. The latter alone gave 5500 recruits.³⁵ Apart from using their local influence, very effective use of the local bards was made. The name of Deep Chand Khande Wala of District Rohtak is worth mentioning. His following *ragnis*³⁶ acquired the status of folk songs,

A young wife exhorts her husband:

*Piya bharti ho le na patjya chatrapan ka tol,
German mein ja ke lariye,
Apne maan-baap ka nan kariye,
Ho topan kea age ariye,
Apnee chhati ne de khol,
Piya bharti.....*

(My dear get recruited so that your bravery can be adjudged. Go and fight the Germans and bring laurels to your parents. Open the buttons of your shirt and face the guns)

In another *ragni* the wife of a soldier of 6th Jat Rifle Infantry curses the Germans like this:

*German tera jaio satyanas, aaj ke tadke,
Tane mare birane laal, jahajan men bhar bharke,
Main kis pe karun Singar, mera kalja dharke,
German ne Gola Marya, ja phootya amber men,
Garad ten sipahi bhajye, roti chhod langar men,
Re un heeran ka ke jeena, jinke baalam chai number men.*

[German you be damned today or tomorrow. You got killed plane loads of youngmen. The shell fired from a German gun exploded in the sky and out of fear the soldiers left their guard duty as well as their food in the mess. What life those ladies have, whose husbands serve in number 6 (the 6th Jat Light Infantry)].

During the war, from August, 1914 to November 11, 1918 about 80,000 men had been contributed by the five British districts and the four native states comprising Haryana. Of the 28 districts of Punjab Rohtak came third, Gurgaon sixth and Hissar ninth. Almost a similar situation obtained when the recruitment was viewed as percentage of total population of recruitable age of the districts³⁷ (Table 2). Even the schools offered recruitment (Table 3).

It was the cumulative effect of the efforts of political and community leaders that accelerated the recruitment process. The attitude of the agriculturist communities towards the British because Land Alienation

35. Yadav K.C., "Veer Ahir: The Martial Traditions of Yadavas," In *Yadav Shorya Gatha*, (New Delhi, 2002), pp. 5-6.

36. Yadav Atul, *Haryana: Lok Sanskritik Dharohar*, (Radour, 1999), p.78.

37. Leigh M.S., *op.cit.*, pp. 35-36.

Act of 1900, was very positive. The prospects of awards, *Jagirs* and *Sanads* and promises of a dominion status also contributed to this process. Moreover, the 'Martial Classes' had strong military traditions which they were proud of and which they wanted to maintain. They had developed a feeling that the most suitable profession for them was soldiering. The British also gave incentives to recruits to join the army. In the later part of the war pressure was also applied to obtain recruits.

The soldiers recruited during World War-I from Haryana were mostly from the agriculturist communities. The semi-illiterate soldiers who fought in foreign countries, especially in European countries, were highly impressed by their high standard of living, education, economy, culture and sanitation. No wonder after returning to their native places they became agents of social change. This exposure not only changed their life style but also their general outlook. A fact that greatly influenced many a family who came in touch with them in their village and surrounding areas.

Since the Indian soldiers had fought side by side with the Europeans during the war, they started feeling that they were as good as Europeans. This pride and increased self confidence was one of the most significant results of the war time experience which could be tapped for political consciousness in the right situation.

Percival Spear has remarked that 'the First World War forms the portal through which India entered the stage of the modern world'. The First World War was an important landmark in the chequered history of the Indian Army not only because it played a significant part in various theatres of the war, but also because, during this period, it underwent considerable changes which had great impact on its subsequent history. The insatiable demand of the war for manpower necessitated changes in its recruiting policy and organization. Besides, the massive involvement of the Indian Army in the war, the war gave a new turn to the national movement in the country.³⁸

38. Pradhan S.D. 'Indian Army and the First World War', In Ellinwood Dewitt C.. and Pradhan S.D.(Ed.), *India and World War-I*, (New Delhi, 1978), p. 49.

Table-1
Recruitment of Man Power according to Divisional Recruiting Officers

District/State	Combatants in the Indian Army on Jan. 1, 1915	Enlisted in Period from Aug. 4, 1941 to March 31, 1916	Jan. 1, 1917 to June 30, 1917	July 1, 1917 to Dec. 31, 1917	Jan. 1, 1918 to May 31, 1918	June 1, 1918 to Nov. 30, 1918	Total number in Indian Army and Imperial Service troops on Nov. 30, 1918
Hissar	3046	2795	1438	4589	1251	3697	15461
Rohtak	6245	5025	3014	3661	1546	3950	22144
Gurgaon	2481	3440	2241	4048	2184	4869	18867
Karnal	633	532	635	1463	683	3005	6553
Ambala	1755	1256	482	989	1893	2070	8341
Jind	1283	...	579	711	578	868	7238
Pataudi	...	...	44	06	14	44	108
Loharu	06	...	71	14	21	47	159
Dujana	...	...	...	08	96	156	273
Total (Haryana)	15449	13048	8504	15489	8266	18707	79144
Total (Punjab)	86967	64519	29733	61716	62483	88413	11308

N.B. In addition to the above, some areas of Haryana Viz. Kanina, Ateli Mandi and Bawal formed a part of Nabha State while Narnaul and Kanod (Mahendergarh) were included in Patiala State. The figures of these areas are not available.

Source: Leigh, M.S., *The Punjab and the war*, p. 59.

Table-2
Recruitment of Man Power according to Local War Histories

District/State	Number of Males of Military age	Total Number of Men who Served	Number of men enlisted during the war	Number of total casualties	Percentage on column 2 of column 3	Percentage on column 2 of column 4	Percentage on column 3 of column 5
Hissar	134000	18400	16000	344	13.7	11.8	1.8
Rohtak	118170	28245	22000	692	23.9	18.5	2.4
Gurgaon	124240	20181	17700	314	16.2	14.2	1.5
Karnal	134200	6819	6530	67	5.0	4.8	1.0
Ambala	120800	10254	7400	315	8.4	6.1	3.1
Jind	45900	8673	6323	311	18.9	13.7	3.5
Pataudi	3100	450	450	...	14.5	14.5	...
Loharu	3060	378	281	1	9.1	9.1	0.2
Dujana	4100	1266	955	7	23.2	23.2	1.2
Total (Haryana)	67,7,620	94,666	77,639	2051	11.29	11.29	2.16
Total (Punjab)	4,013,920	4,98,560	3,95,403	12,794	9.8	9.8	2.5

Source: Leigh, M.S., *The Punjab and the War*, p. 61.

Table-3
Recruitment by Educational Institutions

Name of School	Average roll of Masters and Pupils	Number Enlisted	Other recruits obtained
Jat High School, Rohtak	408	104	
Delhi Reformatory School	139	43	
Vernacular Middle School, Gudiyani	117	30	16
Vernacular Middle School, Kalanour	203	55	11
Distt. Board High School, Gurgaon		35	

Source: Leigh, M.S., *The Punjab and the War*, p. 54.

MEMORY, HISTORY AND VIOLENCE: ENGLISH NOVELS ON THE VIOLENCE OF 1947

Jasbir Singh

*Kaho dair-o-haram walo ye tum ne kya fusoon phoonka,
Khuda ke ghar pe kya guzri sanam khane pe kya guzri.*

(Jagan Nath Azad)

The partition of India, a momentous event in Indian history, continues to tantalize historians, haunt the Indian psyche and cast its shadow on our social and political life. It is closely linked with the chronicle of our freedom struggle that made the actual liberation of the country from foreign yoke, an experience of violence, slaughter and exile for many.¹ The partition of India and consequently the partition of Punjab led to the human agonies and sufferings of unimaginable proportions. The most horrible aspect of the partition was the communal violence which it accompanied. The inhumanity and brutality of the partition violence has benumbed all the sensitive minds. The human sufferings and human experience of those traumatic days are not fully addressed by the historians. The historian is more interested in the facts and the historical discourse on the partition merely speaks about the cold facts of this catastrophic event. "A tragedy like the partition cannot be relegated to statistics alone: there are deaths other than physical which are equally devastating".² The partition cannot be fully understood unless we come to know that how the partition is remembered by the people because memory is an integral part of the reconstruction of the past. Infact, memories are objects that tumble out unexpectedly from the mind, linking the present with the past. "A traumatized memory has a narrative structure which works on a principle opposite to that of any historical narrative. A historical narrative after all concentrates on an event explaining its causes and the timing but what it perhaps cannot explain is whether the subjects belong to the 'marginalia of history' like 'accidents', 'concurrences' or not."³ This is why one sociologist has rightly pointed out that "memory begins where history ends".⁴ Whatever 'fiction' emerges from the survivors' accounts are

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1. M. Asaduddin, "Fiction as History: Partition Stories", *Pangs of Partition: The Human Dimension*, Vol.II, (eds. S. Settar and Indira Baptista Gupta), Manohar, New Delhi, 2002, p.313.
2. Saros Covasjee and K.S. Duggal (eds.) *Orphans of the Storm: Stories on the Partition of India*, UBSPD, New Delhi, 1995, p. XIV.
3. Anasua Basu Ray Chaudhary, "Nostalgia of 'Desh', Memories of Partition", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Dec. 25, 2004, p. 5653.
4. Pradip Kumar Bose, "Memory Begins where History Ends", in Ranabir Samaddar (ed), *Reflections on Partition of the East*, Vikas, New Delhi, 1997, p.85.

not deviations from the 'truth' but are part of the truth in any particular version. The fictiveness in testimony does not involve disputes about facts, but the inevitable variance in perceiving and representing these facts, witness by witness, language by language.⁵

A host of creative writers particularly the novelists have tried to address the human pain and suffering of the partition. Travelling down their memories they have tried to reconstruct the more real and humanistic picture of the partition. Their narratives speak volumes about the brutalities entailed upon the innocent people. This paper has been based on three English novels: *Train to Pakistan* (1956), *Azadi* (1975) and *Ice-Candy Man* (1989). An attempt has been made to analyze the partition violence from the literary point of view to understand how the creative writers memorize and re-establish a tragic event in the history. These narratives offer insights into the new sense of subjectivity, the profound sense of a rupture and the deep personal meanings emerging from the grotesque human massacre.⁶ Violence of the partition days was a sure sign of degradation, which had marked every instance of the nationalist movement and a final refutation of our capacity for decency and freedom. Fictional writings about this period express the bewilderment of the people who had lived through this epoch.

All the novelists, invariably suggest that there was almost communal harmony in the Punjab and people were living in mutual trust and peace. For them, communal violence of 1947 was a sudden rupture with no antecedents.⁷ All the fictional writings interpret the Punjab society from the basic point of view of brotherhood and secularism. The novels assume the existence of a communally shared history in the pre-partition Punjab. Their fictionalized life-worlds of villages and small towns invariably suggest that there was an essential feeling of relatedness between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, not merely a passive acceptance of different customs and beliefs. Khushwant Singh portrays the village life graphically thus:

"Mano Majra is a tiny place— But there is one object that all Mano Majrans venerate. This is a three foot slab of sand stone that stands upright under a *Keekar* tree beside the pond. It is the local diety, the *deo* which all the villagers—Hindus, Sikh, Muslim or pseudo-Christian -repair secretly whenever they are in a special need of blessing."⁸

5. James, E. Young, *Writing and Rewriting Holocaust: Narrative and Consequences of Interpretation*, Bloomington, 1990.

6. S.P. Kumar, "On Narrativizing Partition", *Pangs of Partition: The Human Dimension*, Vol. II (eds. S. Settar and Indira Baptista Gupta), Manohar, New Delhi, 2002, p.227.

7. The historians do not agree to this point. For historians, the partition was a culmination of growing mutual differences (social, economic, political) dating back to the late nineteenth century: see; David Page (*Prelude to Partition*); Anita Inder Singh (*Origins of the Partition of India*); Penderel Moon (*Divide and Quit*); Kirpal Singh (*Partition of the Punjab*).

8. Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*, Rauvi Dyal Publishers, New Delhi, 2001, (First Published, 1956), pp. 10-11.

Thus, in the beginning, people were undisturbed by the communal politics and hatred. The novelists seem to over-romanticize the inter-community relationships of the pre-partition days but it is a matter of fact that communities were not so hostile to each other as during the partition days. The moments of communal hastiness were rare and transient. The experience of life was sufficient secure and rooted to enable the society as a whole to evolve mechanisms for containing tensions. "So that even if there was vile outrage, the rich heterogeneity of life conducted dialogically was never dangerously threatened".⁹ The epidemic of communalism had not paralyzed the social network so far. Prior to partition, politics did not seem to mark the relationships:

"Before the day break, the mail train rushes through on its way to Lahore; and as it approaches the bridge, the driver invariably blows two long whistles. In an instant, all Mano Majra comes awake.— The Mullah at the mosque knows it is time for the morning prayer. He has a quick wash, stands facing west towards Mecca and with his fingers in his ears cries in long sonorous notes, 'Allah-ho-Akbar'. The Priest at the Sikh temple lies in the bed till the Mullah has called. Then he too gets up, draws a bucket of water from the well in the temple courtyard, pours it over himself, and intones his prayer in monotonous singsong to the sound of splashing water".¹⁰

Moreover, there was feeling of shared culture and heritage. The social identity prevailed upon the religious identity. Certainly, social bonding crystallized over the centuries though momentarily:

"Our villages came from the same racial stock. Muslim or Sikhs, we are basically jats. We are brothers. How can we fight each other? — We are dependent on each other; bound by our toil; by *mandi* prices set by the Banyas - they are our common enemy - those city Hindus. To us villagers, what does it matter if a peasant is a Hindu, or a Muslim, or a Sikh?".¹¹

But all these secular values faded away in the wake of communal frenzy. The communal politics tore asunder the social fabric. The society was divided along religious lines due to the short-sighted political aims of the hot-headed and cynical politicians who failed to grasp the reality and to anticipate the dire consequences of the partition. The communities began to feel alienated to each other. The neighbours and erstwhile brothers were

9. Alok Bhalla, "Memory, History and Fictional Representations of the Partition", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIV No. 44, 1999, pp. 3120-3121.

10. Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*, pp. 12-13.

11. Bapsi Sidhwa, *Ice-Candy Man*, Penguin, New Delhi, 1989, p. 56.

looked as "others". Friends became enemies and the localities became the "cauldrons of conflicting loyalties". The novelists aptly use the metaphor of fratricidal war—brother fighting against brother. Suspicion poisoned the minds and the feeling of oneness began to wither away. For the novelist, the partition means the partition of minds. The communalism worked at both levels - intrusively as well obtrusively.

"Muslims sat sad and moped in their houses. Rumours of atrocities committed by Sikhs on Muslims in Patiala, Ambala and Kapurthala, which they had heard and dismissed, came back to their minds. — Quite suddenly every Sikh in Mano Majra became a stranger with an evil intent. His long hair and beard appeared barbarous, his Kirpan menacingly anti-Muslim. — The Sikhs were sullen and angry. 'Never trust a Mussulman', they said. The last Guru had warned them that Muslims had no loyalties".¹²

The truth of the partition lay, at least for its victims, in the violence done to them. These novels reflect the barbarity and madness of the partition violence. The magnitude of communal violence was unprecedented. The novels re-evoked the tales of those blood-spattered days before our eyes and effect created is far-reaching. The communally charged minds rendered no mercy:

"And then it became almost a daily ritual. There were four or five cases of stabbing each day, and at least four or five fires. A Hindu was caught hold in a deserted part of the city, a large kitchen knife was driven through his stomach, and he was left to die on the road. The killing was invariably done with a knife and often the knife, large blade driven clean through, was left in the body of the victim. Where the victim survived the first blow, he was repeatedly stabbed in the chest and the abdomen. Faces were not disfigured, but the killers had a macabre fascination for ripping open stomachs. In each case, the intestines of the man would have spilled from the body and would be lying next to him in a pool of his blood".¹³

From the stray incidents of violence at the initial stage, the killings took the form of organized attacks and the situation of civil war was created. The attacks were pre-planned in such a fashion that there was a little escape for the victims. The novelists compile an endless cumulative dossier of barbarity of the mayhem of 1947. They fictionalize the unqualified horror and terror. The pain and agony speaks spontaneously. Indeed, there was

12. Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*, p. 141.

13. Chaman Nahal, *Azadi*, A.H. Publishers, n.p., 1975, pp. 125-126.

hardly any family which survived those days without feeling perpetually threatened by the repulsive and ruthless; there was hardly anyone who didn't hide in some dark corner for safety as mobs outside, armed with thirsty spears and the names of gods, killed each other for small pathetic gain:

"The attack came at dawn. The watch from the mosque's single minaret, hurtled down the winding steps to spread the alarm. The panicked women ran to and fro screaming and snatching up their babies, the men barely had time to get their positions. In fifteen minutes the village was swamped by the Sikhs—tall men with streaming hair and thick biceps and thighs, waving full sized swords and sten-guns, roaring, '*Bolay So Nihal! Sat Siri Akal!*' They moved down the villagers in the mosque with the sten-guns. Shouting '*Allah-ho-Akbar!*' The peasants died of sword and spear wounds in the slushy lanes and courtyards, the screams of women from the *Chaudhry's* house ringing in their ears, wondering why the house was not burning".¹⁴

"—Rana saw his uncles beheaded. His older brothers, his cousins. The Sikhs were among them like hairy vengeful demons, wielding bloodied swords, dragging them out as a sprinkling of Hindus, darting about at the fringes, their faces vaguely familiar, pointed out and identified the Musulmans by name. He felt a blow cleave the back of his head and warm flow of blood.... Later in the evening he awoke to silence. At once he became fully conscious. He wiggled backwards over the bodies and slipping free of the weight on top of him felt himself sink knee-deep into a viscous fluid. The bodies blocking the entrance had turned the room into a pool of blood".¹⁵

The violence of 1947 was essentially the mob violence where the individual merged his identity with the mob and surrendered his sanity to it, making it an impersonal and abstract force. The ordinary people were trapped in the endless cycle of the violence and hatred. Once they plunged into the violence they were unable to extricate themselves. They were moved by the forces greater than they could control. The perpetrators of violence found some sort of romance in killing the 'others' ruthlessly.

"The processionists are milling about two jeeps pushed back to back. They come to a halt: the men in front of the procession pulling ahead and the mob behind banked closed up. There is a quickening in the activity about the jeeps. My eyes focus on an emaciated *Banya* wearing a

14. Bapsi Sidhwa, *Ice-Candy Man*, p.199.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

white Gandhi cap. The man is knocked down. His lips are drawn away from rotting *paan* stained teeth in a scream. The men move back and in the small clearing I see his legs sticking out of his dhoti right up to the groin—each thin, brown legs tied to jeep. Ayah, holding her hands over my eyes, collapses on the floor pulling me down with her. There is the roar of a hundred throats: 'Allah-ho-Akbar!' and beneath it the growl of reviving motors.... I never again want to see."¹⁶

The partition ushered in many uncertainties in a situation where violence seemed to be the only certainty. The killings were carried on by an arithmetic precision. These novels portray the elemental ferocity of the partition violence. To describe these killings as bestial would be doing injustice to the world of beasts: animals never behave in as brutal manner as humans. The violence of 1947 gives flashbacks of the medieval barbarism.

"An old peasant with a gray beard lay flat on the water. His arms were stretched out as if he had been crucified. His mouth was wide open and showed his toothless gums, his eyes were covered with film, his hair floated about his head like a halo. He had a deep wound on his neck which slanted down from one side to the chest. A child's head butted into the old man's armpit. There was a hole in it's back. There were many others coming down the river like logs hewn on mountains and cast into streams to be carried down to the plains. A few passed through the middle of the arches and sped onward faster. Others bumped into the piers and turned over to show their wounds till the current turned them over again. Some were without limbs, some had their bellies torn open, many women's breasts were slashed. They floated down the sunlit river, bobbing up and down. Overhead hung the kites and vultures."¹⁷

The feeling of revenge further precipitated the violence. Neither self immolation nor revenge are acts of violence in the victims account; they are acts done as duty, as a response to the call of duty, securing the life of the community or nation.¹⁸ There was a misconception among all the communities that revenge and retaliation would stop killings on the other side but on the contrary, this led to the greater devastation of human life. 'Revenge' is a violence which is not treated as violence—only as a just recompense. It is entirely different from the feared violence—of the enemy

16. *Ibid.*, p.135.

17. Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*, p. 165.

18. Gyanendra Pandey, "Community and Violence : Recalling Partition", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 52, Aug. 9, 1997; p. 2037.

even though it is exactly the same. Once this circle of revenge was started, it became impossible to bring it to the siege. Killing the others was looked upon as a sacred duty. The more a person killed, the more holy he was. Religious sentiments were provoked.

"What sort of Sikhs are you? Asked the boy, glowering menacingly. He elaborated his question: 'Potent or Impotent?' Do you know how many trainloads of dead Sikhs and Hindus have come over.? Do you know of the massacres of Rawalpindi and Multan, Gujranwala and Sheikhpura.? What are you doing about? You just eat and sleep and you call yourselves Sikhs— the brave Sikhs! The martial Class!" '.....For each Hindu or Sikh they kill, kill two mussulmans. For each woman they abduct or rape, abduct two. For each home they loot, loot two. That will stop killing on the other side. It will teach them that we can also play this game of killing and looting".¹⁹

These partition novels reveal another tragic fact about the partition. One's own identity became a threat to the life. Religious symbols or a distinct identity proved to be costly for life. People had to change their identities as per the requirement of the situation to avert the death. There were times when a man's life dependent on whether or not the foreskin of his penis was circumcised.

"Where's Hari, the gardener? someone from the back shouts. Hari has become Himat Ali! Says Iman Din, roaring genially and glancing at the gardener — Let us make sure, a man says, hitching up his lungi, his swaggering gait bent on mischief. 'Undo your Shalwar, Himat Ali. Let's see if you're a proper Muslim.' '.....'O Yay Nai! Did you circumcise the gardener here!' 'I did a good job on him. I will vouch for Himat Ali.' 'Tell him to recite The Kalma.' Shouts someone. '*La Ilaha, Illallah, Mohammad ur Rasulullah.*' Astonishingly, Himat Ali injects into the Arabic verse the cadence and intonation of Hindu chants."²⁰

Thus, the rending of social and emotional fabric that took place with the partition in 1947 is still far from mended. The creative writer through the series of delicate imagination has emotionally recorded the horrowing tales of dehumanization at this historical juncture. Whatever the causes and whatever the question, the fact remains that partition pained and like all surgical amputations, it could not cure, just cut at the ailment. The novelist looks at the problem from a humanistic point of view. The fictional

19. Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*, pp. 170-171.

20. Bapsi Sidhwa, *Ice-Candy Man*, pp. 180-181.

texts concerned with India's partition rarely speak about the abstract entities called Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, whose economic and social rights needed to be legally and politically defined. Instead, partition narratives give a human shape and human voice to those in whose name, and for whose benefit, the sordid politics of religious division of sub-continent was enacted.²¹ Some identify a moment in the past when old relations between communities began to show signs of fissure, while others read in the chance utterance of a politician, the cause of tragedy.²² By creating a special fictional space and by speaking through their characters, the creative writers have given us various perspectives on, and sensitive portrayals of those bloody days.

The novelists have narrativized the bewilderment and incommunicability of the people who lived through the violence marked epoch and experienced this traumatic event. They have sensitively recorded the inhumanity and insanity of the partition violence. They have also fully addressed the physical as well as psychological wounds inflicted by the partition. The novels probe the inner workings of the individual as well as general mind, the plight of the humanity under duress, the loss of the self and the human experience of this catastrophic event. For the novelists, the violence which occurred in 1947 was a sudden eruption with no roots, a nightmare, a curse which fell upon their pious land and plagued the festivities of the hard-won independence and shattered all the dreams of the freedom. It was a betrayal of traditions of brotherhood and neighbourhood and moreover, it was a crime against humanity. Thus, the novelist narrates the grim reality of partition violence with a humanistic perspective and tries to reconcile through empathy.

21. Alok Bhalla, *Partition Dialogues: Memories of a Lost Home*, OUP, New Delhi, 2006, p. XI.

22. Alok Bhalla, "Memory, History and Fictional Representations of the Partition", *op.cit.*, p. 3120.

THE PARTITION AND SINDH

*Ahmad Salim**

The relative harmony among the Hindus and Muslims of Sindh, established over centuries became directly at risk due to many traditional and non-traditional factors. Traditional factors including the economic exploitation of Sindhi Muslim at the hands of Hindu money-lender arose after the British conquest and the resultant British Civil Code, which offered protection and prospects to the Hindu *bania* (money-lender). These factors jeopardized the possibilities of continuity of nonviolent social infrastructure of Sindhi people. Related to these are non-traditional threats that directly devastated peoples' lives. They included social unrest flowing from communal hatreds; increasing poverty amongst the Muslims; as well as other immediate threats to human lives from disturbances and riots. It was demonstrated through incidents like riots of 1831, Larkana riots in 1928, Masjid Manzilgah issue and so on. Thus, it becomes far more imperative to consider these issues in detail for a true understanding of the constituents of the socio-political and economic fabric of Sindh.

Another important issue in the history of Sindh was its separation from Bombay presidency, which left the Sindhi Hindus very bitter because they thought that their economic and political interests would be at stake in a government dominated by Muslims thus increasing communal bitterness. Partition of Sindh did not prove to be beneficial to the ordinary Sindhi, the status of *hari* (tenant) never changed. Although, he underwent a change of masters - from Hindu capitalists to Muslim *waderas* (landlords).

This study first identifies the key factors that increased communal bitterness and then systematically explores how and why they directly affected the lives and social obligations of the individuals. Second, it assesses the communal atmosphere shortly after the Indo-Pak Partition of 1947. The absence of large-scale violence made the Sindhi experience different from that of the Punjabis and Bengalis. Among the Sindhi Hindus, there were fewer dispositions to panic because of violence; they panicked more because of measures adopted by the Sindhi Muslims wielding political power at the time shortly before and after the Partition. An assessment is also made about how with the influx of refugees in Sindh, Muhajir Nationalism was promulgated and Sindhi culture and its indigenous people became handicapped in the hands of people from Punjab and India.

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Over a number of centuries, Sindh had enjoyed religious, cultural and social harmony where religions, castes and tribes evolved a common culture. Historically, Sindh acquired a rural character, but this did not prevent the establishment of important pockets of urban development, which grew up as administrative centres closely linked to trade. The River Indus led the outside world deep into the heartland of northern India and central Asia. First Daybul, and then Lahri Bandar and Karachi became the most important ports on the Indian Ocean. The importance of the Indus as a major channel of commerce through Sindh, in turn, encouraged towns and cities to establish themselves along the river.

Lines of communication in Sindh, like the Indus River, ran from east to west, linking the subcontinent with western Asia through the Bolan, Mula and Lak Phusu passes which led from Sindh into Baluchistan and beyond. Important caravan routes also crossed the Thar Desert to destinations in the Rajputana states and the coastal regions of Kacch, Kathiawar and Gujarat. The towns developed alongside them acting as trading centres as well as '*refueling stations*' for traders.¹

All the same, the ranges of Kohistan together with the eastern desert proved effective barriers, and Sindh was relatively isolated from events taking place elsewhere in northern India. Sindh was one of the first to be conquered by Arabs and somehow always remained under the Muslim political hold. However, due to Sindh's isolation it never fully drew into the wider political framework of northern India during the period of the Delhi Sultanates of the Mughals. Sindh was ruled either by local tribes such as the Sumros and the Sammas who continually jostled with each other for local supremacy or by the semi-independent representatives of governments whose centres of power lay far away. To Kabul and Delhi, Sindh was a distant frontier province. The preservation of 'stability' along its borders remained their main concern, and so they delegated authority to local holders of power in order to achieve their aim. This pattern of Political Control remained virtually unchanged right up to the time of the British arrival: the Talpur Mirs, who ruled Sindh at the time of the British conquest in 1843, were under the suzerainty of the Afghan kings, but in practice they, like their eighteenth century Kalhora predecessors, ruled as 'independent' chiefs.

As for the religious harmony in Sindh is concerned, Hindus and Muslims had co-existed in relative harmony for decades. Sindh's relative isolation was important from the religious point of view. As a 'marginal' region located away from the main centres of orthodox Hinduism, and influenced only indirectly by strongly centralized Muslim states, Sindh developed its own quite distinctive religious character. Before the advent of Islam, a mixture of Buddhism and Hinduism dominated religion in Sindh.

1. Huges, A.W., *A Gazetteer of the Province of Sind*, Karachi, 1876, p.85.

Combined with the fact that the bulk of Muslim conversions were eventually performed by sufis, this meant that popular Islamic practice in Sindh came to display strongly mystical and syncretic trends. Sindhi Sufism was a harmonious blending of both Vedantic and Islamic cultures, and is exemplified in Sachal's axiom: "*I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim.*" The evening prayer of a Sindhi was often: "*God's blessings be on Hindus, on Muslims and on the rest.*" Sindhi Hindus bowed without hesitation in *dargahs* and Sindhi Muslims spontaneously referred to God as *Varuna Zindah Pir*.

Therefore, even when the province became predominantly Muslim, Hindus and Muslims continued to share much of the same cultural framework and many of their religious practices overlapped. By the nineteenth century, Sindhi Muslims outnumbered Hindus by three to one. With the exception of local Ismaili and Memon groups, Hindus made up the bulk of the trading and commercial community and dominated the economic matrix. Although, economically, administratively and even politically, communities changed positions but Hindus, especially *banias* had a firm grip on the economy of the province. The social effects of rural debt were aggravated in Sindh because the creditors were almost all Hindu, the debtors almost all Muslim. The British rule initiated critical changes in the relationship between debtors and creditors, especially by conferring full property rights on landholders. This put them in possession of a valuable asset, which increased their creditworthiness. The catch was that creditors could seize their land to recover their money, a power that was unthinkable in pre-British times.² This gave creditors the opportunity to acquire land cheaply. *Waderas* did not generally have a strong business sense. They did not appreciate the commercial value their land had acquired. Expressing their status through the size of their estates rather than the efficiency of their husbandry, they often sacrificed profits to buy up additional tracts of unproductive land, mortgaging themselves in the process. According to British officials, this left them prey to predatory *banias*. Forbidden by their religion to lend money on interest, Muslims had traditionally left all financial affairs to the Hindu minority. The latter, like minorities elsewhere, had established a reputation as shrewd merchants and bankers, wealthy but disdained by the majority community.

Most of the Muslims lived in the rural areas, earned their livelihood from the land and were largely illiterate. Although many Sayyed families lived in towns, it was the countryside, which provided the basis of the power of Sindh's religious elite. *Pirs* belonging to important shrines wielded enormous social influence and people who did not have a *pir* as their *murshid* were considered non-believers. Thus, *pir* and the *dargah* provided the main transmission belt along which Islam reached the people of the

2. Regulation V of 1827, Chapter V, Section 15, The Bombay Code, 7.

region. This process of conversion made such a deep impact that intense devotion for *sufi* saints and their lines of descendants became the hallmarks of religious practice in Sindh.³

The resultant harmony of communal relations and the valuable economic service rendered by the different communities to the province as a whole held prospects of undisturbed continuity of the status quo. Regional attachment was considered more important than communal consciousness. Even during the British attack, the Hindu community joined hands with the ruling Muslims to offer a stern resistance. Although the history of Sindh marks relative communal harmony unrivalled in the northern part of the sub-continent, certain levels of ambivalence were also demonstrated in the Hindu-Muslim relationship through incidents like riots of 1831, Larkana riots in 1928, Maszid Manzilgah issue and so on. Thus, it becomes imperative to consider these issues in detail for a true understanding of the constituents of the socio-political and economic fabric of Sindh.

In 1831-32 Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Nussarpur. Built in 989 by Nasir Muhana, about sixteen miles north-east of Hyderabad, the town was the residence of influential Lagari Nawabs.

These riots were caused over a Hindu boy who was badly treated by his teacher and the Muslims gave him refuge in a mosque. This infuriated the Hindu community and the Hindu shopkeepers of the town closed their shops against Muslims. This was way the Hindus usually protested, as the population was dependent on them for their necessities. The Muslims retaliated by polluting the wells used by the Hindus. Seth Naomul Hotchand states that the next day a man called Sayed Nooral Shah walked through the bazaar swearing at Hindus. Hotchand's younger brother, Parshram, protested and argued with the Sayed against his uncitizen-like conduct. At this Nooral Shah charged Parshram with blasphemy - he held that Parshram had abused him and the Prophet (PBUH). He visited Tatta, Shah Bandar, Mathiari, Halla and Hyderabad, stirring Muslims and soliciting co-operation and aid from every true Muslim in the name of the *musaf* (Koran). This incited the religious sentiments in Muslims who consequently gathered against the Hindus. Hindus were also planning their moves. Hotchand's brother Parshram by that time withdrew from Sind to Jessulmere. The Muslims assembled in large numbers at Hyderabad, raised a clamour, and prevailed upon Mir Muradali to address a *firman* to Seth Hotchand to send his brother Parshram to Hyderabad. Parshram was not at Karachi, therefore Seth Hotchand himself proceeded to Hyderabad accompanied by about two thousand Hindus in obedience to another *firman* from Muradali, directing his presence in the absence of his son. The Mir referred the case to the *Pirs* of Nussarpur. At Nussarpur the *qazi* doubting the Muslims' intentions refused to listen to the Muslims or to permit a discussion at his place. The Muslims,

3. Ansari, Sarah F.D., *Sufi Saints: A State Power*, Vanguard, 1992, p. 13.

however, forcibly lifted away Seth Hotchand and went to Tatta and Bagani, a town in the Shah Bandar Division. At Bagani the Muslims began to meditate upon his circumcision and conversion to Islam by force.

In the meantime, Mir Muradali was apprised of their intentions. He repented the step he had taken. Seth Hotchand was liberated at his interference, thus, ending the episode of riots in Nussarpur.⁴

The colonial era, starting in 1850 in Sindh, no doubt changed the status of Hindu moneylenders in the social fabric as British law gave them protection and stability against the creditors, who were Muslim farmers. Hindus had filed a number of cases against Muslim debtors in the courts. The accusations and counter accusations in this regard were indicative of communal antagonisms, which sporadically erupted into violence. The occasional conversion of Hindus to Islam was a common trigger for public disturbances. It provoked angry claims from representatives of the Hindu community that force had been used. This was in itself a measure of their increased security since they would hardly have dared an open challenge on so sensitive an issue if the British had not been there to intervene. Muslim representatives would angrily refute the charges and the debate would be taken to the streets. Disputes over conversions provoked riots in Sukkur in 1872, in the Sehwan area in 1884, in Hyderabad bazaar, for no apparent reasons, while a dispute over the playing of music in a temple in Thattha provoked violence in 1891.⁵ In 1893, a Moharram procession in Sukkur turned into an anti-Hindu riot during which the Town Inspector of Police, a Hindu was badly beaten.⁶

These constituted evidence of friction between the two communities, but there were no specifically anti-*bania* riots in Sindh along the lines of the riots, which took place in Deccan in 1875.

In March 1928, Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Larkana. The riots had been caused by the activities of the Hindu fundamentalists of the Shuddhi, Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha movements who were busy scouring the countryside at the time trying to find and 'reconvert' or *shuddhi* (purify) and person they suspected had been converted from Hinduism. A Hindu convert woman who had been married to a small landowner in a village near Dokri in Larkana District for more than fifteen years and was mother of several children was reported to have been kidnapped by Arya Samajist workers. Her family requested the Collector to issue a warrant. The police had brought her to Larkana but the Collector was

4. Bhojwani, Rao Bahadur Alumul Trikamdas (tr.), *Memoirs of Seth Naomul Hotchand*, Oxford 1982, pp. 64-67.

5. District Sup. Police, to Collr., Hyderabad., 26 Aug, 1882 (P.S.C., J.D., file 1, 1882, Vol. II. Pt. II, compn. 47, 78-84; Comm., Sindh, note n.d. (As quoted by Cheesman, David, *Landlord Power and Rural Indebtness in Colonial Sindh 1865 - 1901*, Curzon, p. 185.

6. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p. 185.

very indecisive and kept her as *amanat* (i.e. in trust) in the house of a local notable, Nawab Lahori. The Collector delayed taking action to diffuse the situation, but it soon escalated into a confrontation. The husband and the children of the woman came to complain and asked for her return, but the Larkana administration took no notice.

The incident caused a great deal of resentment in the villages around Larkana as the action of the police was considered an attack on the home and family of a respectable man. A number of villagers entered the town and caused a disturbance. They precipitated a minor riot. The extremist elements particularly the workers of Hindu Mahasabha, went around attacking any Muslim they found alone. In the melee about sixty nine people were injured, eleven of whom were Muslims and the rest Hindus, but one Hindu died as a result of his injuries.⁷ Under pressure from Hindu political workers, the police made a large number of indiscriminate arrests. The Muslims felt helpless and unprotected, as there was no voice of protest from their side. The most important Muslim leaders of the town, Sir Shahnawaz Bhutto and Nawab Lahori had refused to come out of their houses or show any interest or sympathy. However, Khuhro responded immediately. He protested to the magistrate about his extremely arbitrary actions, such as arresting Muslims without proof on the behest of their opponents and enemies. He immediately organized a relief committee.

The Defence Committee succeeded in getting most of the arrested people freed, except ten leading citizens who were committed to the Sessions Court.

The communal friction and extremist organizations like the Shuddhi and Mahasabha movements were bent upon stirring up communal trouble. This case was the beginning of the strife between Hindu and Muslim communities in Sindh. The incident was followed by trouble in other towns as both the communities organized themselves for confrontations with each other strictly on communal and religious lines. Hindu households were armed and young men were trained for combat and taught to use arms. The atmosphere was charged with hostility and the failure of the extremists in Larkana was regarded as a defeat which had to be avenged. The tactic of the communal organizations was to create tension with displays of arms and militancy. If this resulted in provoking communal incidents, there was vociferous newspaper propaganda depicting Hindus as victims of *jat* or 'uncouth' Muslims. Cases were then brought against the rioters. In this way, the majority Muslim population would remain involved and helpless, especially as the bureaucracy was Hindu and able to influence the higher levels of officialdom.

From 1929 to 1931 there were frequent incidents of violence

7. Khuhro, Hamida, *Mohammad Ayub Khuhro - A Life of Courage in Politics*, Ferozsons, 1998, p.73.

particularly in Sukkur, one of the major commercial centres of Sindh. The Hindu community was in a majority in the town and much more aggressive in their proselytizing. In August 1930, an incident occurred in Sukkur in which Muslims were beaten and injured by Hindus. Muslims of surrounding villages poured into the city to avenge the outrage. This resulted in a riot and incidents of looting in the city. The administration, following the Larkana pattern, made mass arrests of the villagers and charged them with the most serious crimes. There was a public outcry about the use of intimidation and punishment by the police of the suspected people.

Another element, which contributed to the communal friction, was the Indian religious exclusivism, which restricted social relations between the communities and the practice of *chhoot* or 'untouchability'. This was not confined to the lower castes of Hindus, but also forbade socializing and eating with non-Hindus. In a majority Muslim province like Sindh this was not a problem but during the British 'neutral' rule, when they also had the economic upper hand, religious exclusivism came out into the open. The collapse of Non Co-operation and Khilafat movements had unleashed an intolerant mood in India, which can only be explained by the use of the religious idiom by the politicians.

Inter communal marriages were absolutely taboo. However, in the rural areas it was a fairly common practice that lower caste tribal girls were sold by their parents or by middlemen to well off villagers who converted and married them. The *shuddhi* movement, therefore, not only threatened such households (of which there would be at least half a dozen in a big village,) but also created communal hatred far greater than the actual number of people affected.⁸

The almost century old British rule had seen the erosion of the traditional social equations in Sindh and created raw edges in the relationship of the Hindu and Muslim communities. To a large extent this was the result of the new legal and taxation systems, which allowed the *haris* and small holders to fall into debt and what was worse, lose their land which was the sole source of their livelihood. Those suffering the hardships of the new system found a ready scapegoat in the *bania* and the urban businessmen. The growing power of the latter and their intrusion into agriculture, where they became owners of large tracts of land and orchards, led to resentments across the spectrum of the traditional rural society.

The Sindhi Muslims trembled before the Hindu moneylender's reed-pen.⁹ The Hindu *bania*, the trader and moneylender, was the creditor, who tyrannized over the debtor, imposing harsher and inequitable terms. The Muslim *zamindar* was the perennial debtor. Debt was an intolerable burden

8. Khuhro, *op.cit.*, p. 185.

9. Burton, Sir Richard, *Sindh Revisited*, Vol.1, p.299, cited in Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p.161.

on Sindhi Muslims in general, and the *waderas* in particular.

After the conquest the Hindus took advantage of the protection provided by British rule. They started taking up land to establish themselves as landholders. Evidence was provided in 1896 by an investigation into six 'representative' villages from each of the forty-seven irrigated *talukas* in Sindh.¹⁰ The Report estimated that Hindus held twenty-eight percent of the occupied area in 1895-96. This represent a revolution in land ownership for half a century, before they had held virtually nothing. Moreover, of the 30,839 acres which they had acquired in the selected villages between 1890-91 and 1895-96, only 7,683 acres, roughly a quarter, was new land taken up by them: the rest, 24 143 acres, they had taken from Muslims. They also enjoyed the produce of a further fifteen percent of the land, which was mortgaged to them. Altogether, then, by 1896, Hindus had the benefit of forty-two percent of the occupied area.¹¹

In the context, the growth of indebtedness could have serious political consequences. People who lost their land or witnessed the suffering of indebted neighbours might lose faith in the British Raj. They might cease to cooperate over crime and taxation; they might even oppose the British authorities. British officers, therefore, developed a jaundiced view of *bantias*, regarding them as a troublesome complication, bent on eroding the foundations of the British administration. The political sensitivity of debt increased with time. It became explosive in the twentieth century, when Muslim indebtedness fuelled resentment against Hindu *bantias*, boosting the popularity of the Pakistan movement.

No doubt the significance of credit in economic development cannot be denied. Some moneylenders were rapacious, but money had to be lent if cultivation was to take place.¹²

Bantias were tradesmen. Their interest in land grew out of their trading activities. Some may, like *waderas*, had hoped to boost their *izzat* (respect) through large holdings, but they were more interested in land as an investment. It guaranteed access to raw materials. Hindu merchants were keen to start their own farms. Much of the profit they realized from the growth of Sindh's export trade, based on the produce of Sindhi farms, was invested in land. To keep their overheads down, they preferred smaller, more intensively cultivated holdings than Muslims.¹³

As merchants, Hindus were middlemen. They bought produce from the cultivators at the threshing floor. Some they kept for retailing locally, the rest they sold on to the dealers. As traders, they were a natural source of credit, providing among other things, the investments that enabled

10. Commr., Sindh, To Govt., Bombay, Aug.12,1896, Note A (P.G.D., R.D.L., 1899 July - Dec., Conf. 798-9.

11. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p. 162.

12. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p. 163.

13. *Ibid.* p. 164.

agriculture to develop. The system had evolved to suit those engaged in trade. It saved the great merchants from employing a large body of agents to go shopping round the farms, while it provided the *banias* with secure trading contacts. Naturally, this was less advantageous to the producers. But the agriculturists had little choice. They did not have connections among the large dealers. Secondly, they were not simply selling their produce; they were regulating their accounts at the same time. Before they could sell their produce on the open market, they had to pay off the season's debts. Many, though, found themselves as impoverished at the end of the season as the start, if not more so.

The problem lay in the mixture of transactions that took place when farmers sold their produce. First, their *banias* established the value of the crop, with reference to the price they expected to sell it for in the market. This they compared with the outstanding debts. The price credited to the agriculturist represented the difference between the value attributed to the crop and the debt owed. The calculations were complicated by fluctuations in price throughout the year. An agriculturist who borrowed seeds at the beginning of the season, when prices were high, would repay at harvest time, when prices were low. The *bania* had to maintain a record of the prices prevailing at the different times. As one can imagine, the arithmetic could be extremely confusing, *'even if the banias were honest and not addicted to taking unfair advantage of the complication.'*¹⁴ With illiterate clients who were ignorant of business, the temptation was strong for *banias* to twist the record to their own advantage and they sometimes succeeded in buying produce at excessively low rates, which bore little relation to those quoted in the markets.¹⁵ Even if the clients were literate, it made little difference since accounts were kept in a specialist *bania* Sindhi script, which was incomprehensible to most non-*banias*.

Hindus occupied an ambiguous place in Sindhi society. Evan James gave an interesting account of what the improved circumstances of Hindus meant in day-to-day terms. When he first served in Sindh in the 1870s, Hindus still had an inherent fear of Muslims, not even venturing to ride horses which, it was generally agreed, were noble animals fit only for the superior community. When he returned to Sindh as Commissioner in the 1890s, he noticed that the Hindus who two decades previously *'never dreamed of riding aught but a camel, now bestride good horses as their former Beluch masters, and never think of alighting to salam whoever it be that passes.'* Idols and religious pictures, he remarked, were now openly displayed in shops and temples, something that would have been unthinkable during his earlier time in Sindh.¹⁶

14. Settl. Offr. 6 Jan, 1873 (B.N.S. 194), Kotri S.R., 38.

15. Depy. Collr., U.S.F., To Commr, Sindh, July 18, 1904, cited in Cheesman.

16. Commr, Sindh, Note, n.d., (B.S.C.) JD, File 1, 1894, Vol. II, pt. 1, compn. 23, para 3.

The old order was changing to the advantage of Hindus. Lewis Mountford, the Manager of Encumbered Estates, accused Hindus of deliberately enforcing their power, as a community, through the civil courts. Most of the subordinate judges were Hindus. Mountford claimed that, with *baniyas* as friends and relations, they took a warped view of what constituted reasonable interest charges, tending to be overly sympathetic towards the claims of creditors. In other words, Hindus ran the courts for Hindus.¹⁷

When it came to crimes against Hindus, there is little doubt that *waderas* were interested parties who were, at the very least, unwilling to assist the British authorities to enforce justice. Since British rule depended on the influence of the *waderas*, anything, which reduced their willingness to collaborate, was, potentially, a threat to that rule. The problem was most acute in the Hyderabad region but Evan James warned in the 1890s that good relations between Hindus and Muslims were beginning to break down all over the province. This was a result of the improved social position of Hindus and Muslim resentment at the working of the Civil Code.¹⁸ In this context the Sindh government tackled the problem of indebtedness. At worst, it seemed that *baniyas* were depriving indebted *waderas* of their land and therefore of their power. At best, indebtedness created a bad feeling among *waderas* and a sense of disenchantment with British rule. The Sindh authorities accordingly devoted themselves to relieving the debts of the Muslim landed magnates, the *jagirdars* and great *zamindars*.

However, in some way the new circumstances also enhanced the deep roots of communal harmony. Sindhis jointly initiated a number of movements against the British during the second and third decades of the 20th century. For instance, the movement for separation of Sindh from Bombay Presidency resulting in Sindh's achievement of provincial autonomy under the last Reforms Act of 1935.

The separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency was one of the major issues in the first few decades of 20th century. Sindh was part of the Bombay Presidency with a large and populous region including Maharashtra and Gujrat and therefore with an overwhelmingly Hindu population. However, constituted as a separate province, Sindh had a Muslim population of over 75 percent. Therefore, it was a question of Muslim rights. It was also an important issue for the bureaucracy of the Bombay Presidency, as they were not willing to let go of such an administrative prize and related privileges. This debate was conducted not on the question of privilege but on the question of finance. The Bombay officials argued that Sindh would not be financially viable and self-supporting and it would not be able to pay back the debt incurred for the Lloyd Barrage at Sukkur, which was under construction at that time. This was

17. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p.165.

18. Commr. Sindh, Note, n.d., (B.S.C.) JD, File 1, 1894, Vol. II, pt. 1, compn. 23, para 3.

a strong point with the opponents of the separation.

Although in the system of 'Dyarchy' introduced in the Reforms of 1919 Sindh got a larger representation in the Bombay Legislative Council, its constitutional position remained essentially unchanged. In view of this, Sindh leaders continued their efforts for the achievement of autonomy. Apart from lobbying the government of Bombay, Rais Bhurgri and his friends came to the conclusion that the issue must be brought to all India political forums. All India National Congress had been made aware of the issue since 1913, now All India Muslim League must also be asked to play its part. In December 1925, in its seventeenth session Muslim League passed the resolution that Sindh should be separated from Bombay and constituted into a separate province.¹⁹

The end of World War-I was followed by a number of dramatic political events in India including Jallianwala Bagh incident and Khilafat and non-cooperation movements. The political atmosphere assumed communal spirit after the failure of Non-cooperation Movement. The Shudhi Sangathan movements were started. The communal bitterness and strife spread throughout India in 1920s and its effects were felt in the peaceful, tolerant atmosphere of Sindh as well. Local branches of Shudhi and other movements were organized and sporadic incidents of violence occurred in different places. This rise of communalism affected the demand for the separation of Sindh in a fundamental way. Hitherto, Hindu leaders had put their considerable weight behind the demand for separation.

Seth Harchandrai Vishindas had been a close associate of Rais Ghulam Mohammad Bhurgri and their group had been the main protagonist of autonomy. On March 9, 1924, Rais Ghulam Mohammad Bhurgri died at the age of forty-five. He had always carried with himself the most important Hindu leadership. As one of the architects of Lucknow Pact, he commanded respect both in Congress and Muslim League ranks. His death left no one to fill the gap and the time was not propitious for the growth of leadership acceptable equally to both communities. Besides, there was the change in the attitude of Harchandrai Vishindas who now withdrew his support from the separation movement.

Hindus opposed separation because in Bombay Presidency Hindus were in majority, whereas in separated Sindh they would be a small minority of about 15 percent. The fact that they were a mainly urban, educated and wholly affluent community with practically a monopoly over government service by the Amil class and world-wide trading connections of the *bhaiband* class and that they would be more than able to hold their own, appeared not to reassure them. The Sindhi Muslims were as backward in Sindh as Muslims were in the rest of India.

19. Khuhro to Iqbal, November 21, 1952, Khuhro papers.

At this critical movement Muslims badly needed new dynamic leadership to champion their cause and to work for autonomy. Fortunately for them such a leadership of men like Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, Noor Mohammed Vakil, Abdullah Haroon, M.A. Khuhro, G.M. Sayed, Syed Miran Mohammed Shah, Allahbaksh Soomro and Ali Mohammed Rashdi became available.²⁰ These two generations of leaders made the case for the separation of Sindh both on financial and political grounds, strong. The earlier protagonists brought up the issue on both Congress and Muslim League platforms and the latter leadership took Sindh successfully through the last and crucial stage of the struggle for autonomy between the years 1928 and 1935.

In response to Delhi Muslim proposals of March 1927 advocating the separation of Sindh, the All India Congress Committee met in Bombay to consider among other things the important questions of Hindu-Muslim unity. Pandit Moti Lal put the following resolution before the AICC: *"The proposals that Sindh should be separated from the Bombay Presidency and constituted into a separate province is one which has already been adopted in the constitution of the Congress on the principle of redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis and the committee is of opinion that the proposal may be given effect to."*

On objections put forward by the Hindus, Pandit Motilal pointed out, that the separation of Sindh would not in any way affect the Hindus adversely. On the other hand, distinguished leaders of Sindh had in the past expressed their disapproval of Sindh being tied to the chariot wheel of Bombay. As for the financial commitments of Bombay in Sindh, such projects as the Sukkur Barrage *'it was only a matter of book entry'* and the Congress was not now concerned with it.²¹

Although, All India Congress had accepted and supported the separation movement more than once, but not all-Hindu opinion concurred in this attitude of Pandit Motilal on financial as well as communal grounds. Jayakar, the Mahasabha leader, insisted that the separation of Sindh be made part of a complete scheme, whereby the entire country would be redistributed on a linguistic basis.

Moreover, the resolution did not propose any comprehensive scheme for the whole of India. It was simply an answer to Muslim proposals. In spite of all counsels of moderation, the Jayakar amendment on Sindh, Baluchistan and NWFP was carried in a slightly changed form. The amendment now read: *"in regard to the proposal that Sindh should be constituted into a separate province, the Committee is of the opinion that the time has arrived for redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis, a*

20. Khuhro, Hamida, *Documents on Separation of Sindh from the Bombay Presidency*, Islamabad 1982, p.xxvii.

21. *The Nehru Report*, 1975 edition, p.49.

principle that has already been adopted by the constitution of the Congress... The Committee is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by constituting Andhra and Sindh and Karnatak into separate provinces."

The proceedings of the conference gave a hint of some of the difficulties that would be encountered in the future negotiations between Hindus and Muslims.

N.C. Kelkar while presiding over the Annual Session of Hindu Mahasabha remarked: "The majorities will hold the minorities as hostages and thus prevail tyranny of majority in any province."²² The idea of holding a minority as hostages was for the first time implanted in the minds of the people by Kelkar and this word later on led to severe bitterness.

1928 to 1935 was a period of hectic constitution making in India. This period saw the arrival of Sir John Simon with his British Parliamentary Commission in 1928 to assess the constitutional needs of India. The Indian politicians responded with a variety of proposals including the Delhi Muslim Proposals, the All Parties Conference, the Nehru Report, M.A. Jinnah's Fourteen Points and the Allahabad Muslim League session of 1930.

There was an intensification of the separation struggle in Sindh with its outpouring of literature, convening of conferences and building up of public opinion. By the beginning of 1930 the game was back in the hands of the Sindh players. This period was undoubtedly one of the most crucial in the history of the sub-continent of India and shaped the subsequent course of history till well after the achievement of independence. A significant result of the period was the achievement of provincial autonomy, the inauguration of fully elected legislatures and fully responsible ministries at the provincial level. The Act of 1935 constituted Sindh into a separate autonomous province. The struggle for autonomy had lasted over twenty years and was brilliant example of unity of purpose and devotion to a cause by the Muslims of Sindh.

The demand for separation of Sindh was strongly advanced by the All India Muslim League in an attempt to increase Muslim provinces in India. The Sindh Muslims, who expected a larger share of political and economic benefits from a separate province, took up the issue. Though the scheme was strongly opposed mostly by the Sindh Hindus, the British government found it practical politics to separate Sindh from Bombay Presidency mainly because Muslim cooperation was necessary to formulate a sound constitution of India and partly because it was thought the separation of Sindh would minimize further communal strife. Separation of Sindh left the Sindh Hindus very bitter because they thought that their economic and political interests would be at stake in a government

22. Pervez, Ikram ul Haque, *The Contribution of Sindhi Muslims in Pakistan Movement*, University of Sindh, 1984, p. 156.

dominated by Muslims.

As discussed earlier, Hindu community had enjoyed the privilege of protection provided by the British law as the most powerful and economically stable community in the province. The growing indebtedness of Muslim *waderas* and *haris*, to the Hindu moneylenders, complicated the political circumstances. Muslims lost their lands to Hindu moneylenders and were losing their faith in the British Raj. But the partition of Sindh did not prove to be beneficial to the ordinary Sindhi, the status of *hari* never changed. Although, there was a change of masters - from Hindu capitalists to Muslim *waderas*.

Waderas did not have a sense of justice and equity and were mostly illiterate although they were moneyed and well connected. They treated *haris* like domestic animals, who enjoyed no privileges of rationality, no rights as human beings. Such was the condition of the poor *haris* of Sindh who formed the bulk of its population and tilled its land. Even to this day the *haris* of Sindh are no better than serfs, they live in almost primitive conditions without any conception of social, political or economic rights; they have only one interest in life that is food, with which to keep body and soul together. No other interest of life attracts them because the fundamental problem of living remains unsolved for them.²³

The *haris* had no organized life nor had the consciousness of organized living developed in them. They lived scattered, far from one another, in small hamlets consisting of thatched mud houses. Even the wives and daughters of *haris* were not safe from the *zamindars*. "*Fear reigned supreme in their lives - fear of imprisonment, fear of losing his child, wife or life. The zamindar might at any time get annoyed with him and oust him - he might have to leave his crop half ripe, his cattle might also be snatched and he might be beaten out of the village - he might suddenly find himself in the fetters of police under an enquiry for theft, robbery or murder or, more often, under Section 110 of the Criminal Procedure Code. He is frequently threatened by the zamindar with imprisonment, which he believes can be arranged by him through his official friends. He well remembers the fate of other haris who incurred the wrath of the zamindar and were wrongfully locked up in ill-ventilated, congested and suffocating sub-jails for very long periods where they suffered terms of imprisonment under-trial than what they suffered on actual conviction.*"²⁴

The *zamindar* could at any time send for the *hari* for *baigar* (forced labour) for the construction of his house or sinking of wells, or some other minor works. The *hari* could be called to come with his plough and bullocks to cultivate the private fields of the *zamindar* to spend a few days on shoot with him; or to render some domestic service. He was, thus, always at the

23. Hyder Baksh Jatoti, *Statement of the Accused*, Hyderabad, 1997, p.87.

24. *Minutes of Dissent*, by Mr. M. Masud Khadderposh.

beck and call of the *zamindar* and he dare not refuse, as annoyance of the *zamindar* would spell his doom.

Therefore, change of masters did not decrease the plight of the poor Sindhi and his circumstances never changed. However, the train of political events kept on going as the partition of 1947 came nearer.

In the administrative set up of Sindh and Indian political front, there was a total cleavage of opinion between the Muslims and Hindus on the issue of Partition. The Muslims were demanding Pakistan while the Hindus were for a united India, thus supporting Muslim League and Congress respectively. The Sindh Ittehad Party (Sindh United Party), of all other provincial parties, was the strongest in Sindh, having Muslims as well as Hindus on its membership and was also the majority party in Sindh Assembly. Allah Bakhsh's Premiership depended on the support of this Party.

The strategy of the Muslim League High Command was to disintegrate the unity of such provincial political parties, which were based on collaboration between Hindus and Muslims especially in Muslim majority provinces. Thus, in the case of Sindh, Allah Bakhsh Soomro and his Sindh Ittehad Party was their main target. Muslim League needed an opportunity to challenge the Allah Bakhsh government. It came in 1939 during an agitation resulting from the disputed status of a domed building, Manzilgah in Sukkur.²⁵ The local leaders of Muslim League like G.M. Sayed and Khuhro were quite active against the Hindu community in this movement.

The Sukkur Muslims claimed the building was really a mosque and should be restored to the Muslim community. The dispute was essentially a matter between the government and the Muslim community, but the issue assumed a communal aspect when the Hindus became concerned with its settlement.²⁶ The Muslim demand for the Manzilgah attracted Hindu interest not simply because of its religious nature, but also because the claim bore some relation to the widely disparate socio-economic levels of the two communities in Sukkur.²⁷ The feelings of fear and insecurity aroused during the separation movement days had never entirely left Sindhi Hindus and they viewed the Muslim claim to the Manzilgah as a threat to their position of dominance and control. Thus they opposed the claim and declared that the building should remain under government control.

Earlier deputations and appeals to the government by Sukkur Muslims had failed but their hope was renewed by the government's

25. Manzilgah building and its mosque and rest house built during Akbar's reign, was in the government's hands. See for details, Soomro, Mohammad Qasim, *Muslim Politics in Sindh 1938-47*, Jamshoro, 1989.

26. *Causes of Sukkur Disturbances*, Appendix B, pp. 46 ff.

27. P & J 4889 'Note on the Honourable Home Minister's Tour' by R.M. Maxwell, I.C.S., n.p.

successful settlement of the Om Mandli and Hanuman Mandir affairs in May 1939.²⁸ Anticipating the determined opposition of the Sukkur Hindus, the Muslims in Sukkur approached the Sindh Muslim League. Finding a universal positive response from the town's various Muslim *anjumans*, Abdullah Haroon publicly declared League support at a meeting in Sukkur on May 19, 1939.²⁹

The matter attracted common attention in 1938, after the Sindh Provincial Muslim League passed a resolution demanding the government to handover the mosque to the Muslims. The dispute was taken over politically as well as religiously. The government's failure to undertake immediate steps for the Manzilgah's restoration prompted the League to appoint a restoration committee to bring still greater pressure on the government. The first meeting of the committee was held on July 22 and 23.³⁰ During the meeting August 18, 1939, was declared as Manzilgah Day. It was also decided that if the Ministry did not accept the Muslim demand, All India Muslim League volunteers would be asked to start *satyagraha*³¹ to have the Manzilgah on October 1.

Abdullah Haroon stayed in Sukkur and led the agitation. When the agitation later gained strength, the Sindh Premier ordered Abdullah Haroon to leave Sukkur, and M.A. Khuhro was put under house arrest. Afterwards, G.M. Sayed started the agitation and arranged a hunger strike at the doorsteps of the ministers and their supporters. Groups were formed to assist the hunger strikers. It was the concern of the provincial Muslim League to get the mosque back, and, therefore, a Restoration Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Abdullah Haroon. This made the Muslim League a mass Muslim movement in Sindh. The Hindu Association of Sukkur, Hindu Mahasabha and Hindu Panchayat opposed the restoration of Manzilgah to Muslims.

In subsequent weeks the League leadership continued its efforts, but the government failed to grant the Muslim demand; it adopted a policy of avoiding the issue and postponing its settlement. Allah Baksh felt unable to take a stand because his pre-eminent goal was to stay in office.³² Therefore, he could not lose his Hindu supporters.

The inability of the moderates, Haroon and Khuhro, to persuade the government to grant the Manzilgah demand, gave ascendancy to the radical wing in the League. In order to retain their leadership in the League, Haroon and Khuhro were compelled to support the radical method of *satyagraha* though they hoped to obscure their action by maintaining a public front of issuing appeals and letter writing.³³ The emergence of the radical wing as

28. Sayed, G.M., *Struggle for a new Sindh*, p.31.

29. *Weston Report*, p.8.

30. *Weston Report*, pp. 27 ff.

31. Soomro, *op.cit.*, p.54.

32. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p.135.

33. *Weston Report*, pp. 28-29.

the dominant group in the party was clearly reflected in the resolution passed at the next meeting of the restoration committee on September 29, 1939. The resolution called for the commencement of *satyagraha* within three days unless a settlement was reached.³⁴

Haroon and Khuhro invited Allah Baksh to Sukkur in a final effort to persuade the government to concede the Muslims' demand. The chief minister arrived on October 1, the day *satyagraha* was scheduled to begin, and held talks with the League leaders. But once again, no agreement was reached and as a result *satyagraha* was begun.

Satyagrahis and volunteers had been streaming into Sukkur over the past several days at the urging of Wajid Ali, a local League leader and a barrister from nearby Shikarpur, who was given the title of 'Dictator'.³⁵ By the second day of *satyagraha* about two thousand people had gathered, and on the morning of the third day, a group of them pushed out the police and occupied the building. G.M. Sayyed was at the forefront of this movement, he states: "*My days with the Congress had taught me that once it has started, it is extremely insulting and damaging to call off an agitation halfway through. Therefore, I took over the leadership of the movement and had the Masjid Manzilgah taken over by force.*"³⁶ Thus, for the time being, restoration of the Manzilgah was achieved.

The government reaction to the taking of the Manzilgah was one of shock and embarrassment but Allah Bakhsh, undaunted, adopted an unusual tactic that he hoped would return the situation to normal. He gave orders through the Sukkur District Magistrate that all Muslim *satyagrahis* were to be released and all police withdrawn.³⁷ He said that he had taken this decision because the jails were full and there was no more food to feed the prisoners, but in reality he hoped to defuse the situation, reasoning the *satyagrahis* would lose their cause and disperse if the government demonstrated leniency.³⁸ But subsequent events proved Allah Bakhsh had misjudged the situation. The *satyagrahis* did not leave. They were overtaken by bitterness realizing the government had no intention of giving up the mosque and became even more determined in their claim.

On the morning of November 19, G.M. Sayed and the other leaders of the restoration committee were arrested in Sukkur, and at noon the police took possession of the Manzilgah, expelling the *satyagrahis* with tear gas. After forty-eight days of Muslim occupation, the Manzilgah was once again in government hands.

The expulsion of the Muslims from the Manzilgah and its

34. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p.135.

35. *Weston Report*, p. 28.

36. Sayed, G.M., *The Case of Sindh*, Karachi, 1995, p. 27.

37. IOR, *Linlithgow Papers*, MSS. Eur. F 125/96, Graham to Linlithgow, no. 1, Jan. 4, 1940, p. 1.

38. Sayed, G.M., *Struggle for a new Sindh*, p.34.

reoccupation by the government was followed by a wave of communal disturbance and rioting that began in Sukkur and spread into the surrounding district.³⁹ Both communities suffered comparative losses in the riots in terms of property, injuries and loss of life in Sukkur town, but the Hindus suffered most dramatically in Sukkur District as more of them were killed than were Muslims.⁴⁰

The combined result of these events was the riots of 1939, which, eventually led to the fall of the Allah Bakhsh Ministry in Sindh. It also afforded an opportunity to the Muslim League to push through the resolution demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims, but at great cost to both the League's image and Sindh's communal peace; results that posed serious questions about the League's ability to govern should they now come to power.⁴¹

Although communal rifts started once again in Sindh, now under the influence of the 1947 partition, the communal harmony remained undamaged. The province had inherited a tradition of religious tolerance from the Mirs (the Muslim rulers displaced by the British conquest). Thus, the separation from India engendered a sense of insecurity amongst Hindus, but there was less general disposition to give way to panic or despair. "...the Sindh Hindu Mahasabha's membership consisted of Hindu zamindars who aligned with the Independent Muslim Party, which consisted of the Muslim landed gentry. Religion obviously played no divisive role here as they joined hands to protect their class interest. This was my first insight into upper class, Hindu-Muslim solidarity..."⁴²

The long-lasting inter-communal harmony and absence of large-scale violence made the Sindhi experience of Partition different from that of the Punjabis and Bengalis. "This lack of violence could be attributed to the overarching Sindhi identity which transcended Hindu-Muslim differences, a shared language, script and literature, a deep rooted syncretic tradition with shared pirs and saints and even a similarity in food and dress. Added to this was the economic cement in a feudal society where Hindus were well off, owned land and controlled business..."⁴³

In this scenario, the Hindu immigrants to India took partition as a temporary inter-communal ill will and the apparent intention was soon to return to old houses and old lives. They attributed warmth and co-operation to the Sindhi Muslim neighbours and friends, who escorted many of them to the railway station or harbour. Almost unanimously the deteriorating situation was ascribed to the "arrival of Muslims from outside that is, from

39. IOR, *Linlithgow Papers*, MSS. Eur. F 125/95, Graham to Linlithgow, no. 124, Dec. 22, 1939, p.163.

40. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p.139.

41. Cheesman, *op.cit.*, p.140.

42. Suchitra, *The Sindhi Experience of Partition*, CSDS Archives, Ahmedabad, p.5.

43. *Ibid.* p.3.

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar... Another reason for the relatively smooth transition was that the bulk of them came by the sea route. Of the ones who came by train, only one respondent reported ransacking of luggage by Muslims before they crossed the border. One or two suggested that if at all Sindhi women experienced sexual violence, it was in the refugee camps where cramped quarters and lack of privacy contributed to such instances. But no one could give eyewitness or any other credible accounts of such instances." ⁴⁴

However in the mean time the media and Muslim leaders launched an organized propaganda to shatter the balance of inter-communal harmony. Gopal Das Khosla states that the Muslim leaders had, for some time before the establishment of Pakistan, carried on a ruthless anti-Hindu propaganda and their utterances were not calculated to promote peace. Mr. Ayub Khuhro during his election campaign for the Sindh Legislative Assembly in 1945-46, is reported to have said, *"I am looking forward to the day when the Hindus in Sindh will be so impoverished or economically weakened that their women, even like poor Muslim women today, will be constrained to carry on their heads the midday food to their husbands, brothers and sons toiling in the fields and market places."* ⁴⁵

Later as Minister for Public Works, he declared, *"Let the Hindus of Sindh leave Sindh and go elsewhere. Let them go while the going is good and possible, else I warn that a time is fast coming when in their flight from Sindh, they may not be able to get a horse, or an ass, or a gari, or any other means of transport."* ⁴⁶

Khosla adds that Agha Badaruddin Ahmad, M.L.A., Deputy Speaker of the Sindh Legislative Assembly, in a letter, addressed to the Sukkur District Muslim League Conference, said: *"These Muslims are anxiously and restlessly straining their ears to hear the sound of the hooves of galloping horses, the rattling of the swords and the sky-rending slogans of 'Allah-o-Akbar' of Muslim crusaders."* ⁴⁷ Whereas, in the words of Khosla, the Muslim Press in Sindh was equally violent. *Dawn*, the official organ of the Muslim League, in its issue of September 13, 1947, called upon the Muslim League National Guards to help in searching the baggage and persons of Hindu passengers, both male and female, who were leaving for India. The *Hilal-e-Pakistan*, a Sindhi daily of Hyderabad, published a fanatical article on October 6, 1947, and called upon the Muslim criminals and hooligans to devote their energies in victimizing Hindus. *"You should neither kill nor rob Muslims. On the contrary, your full strength, valor and weapons should be used to wreak vengeance on those people with whom*

44. *Ibid.*, p.3.

45. Quoted by Parsram V. Tahilramani in, *Why the Exodus from Sind?*

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Atwahid*, Karachi, April 9, 1947.

even today thousands of Muslim women are prisoners... Every Muslim who casts his eye on this article and happens to know any dacoit, thief, aggressor or a patharidar should carry our request to him and should instruct him to convey the exact sense of our appeal to members of his Jamiat... You should inform us about your Association or meet us so that we may give you requisite instructions and directions."

This was published after the partition of the country and shows the extent to which the emotions of the Muslim masses were being worked up. The lead given by the Muslim leaders was quickly followed by religious preceptors and the local *zamindars* saw in this anti-Hindu propaganda an opportunity-for the satisfaction of personal greed.⁴⁸

The issue of assimilation of refugees presented a totally different situation in Sindh as compared to West Punjab. The refugee influx in West Punjab, except for a tiny minority, consisted of Punjabis. They took very little time to assimilate in their new surroundings as they shared the language, customs and culture with the people of West Punjab. *"Even the Urdu-speaking refugees, who chose to make Punjab their home, soon assimilated themselves in their new surroundings, and their next generation became as Punjabi as any Punjabi, particularly if they were not-so-rich."*⁴⁹

In Sindh, the refugees had distinctive characteristics. Bringing with them non-Sindhi language, customs and culture, they promulgated Muhajir Nationalism, which was soon established as a symbol of bureaucratic, educational and cultural dominance. Contrary to Punjab, the assimilation of refugees in Sindh seemed improbable because of a different language, culture, and system of land ownership.

The government took over administration of Karachi as the Federal capital on May 22, 1948. This *"brought in a massive influx of Muslim government personnel, largely of aggressive Punjabis, and entailed extensive requisition of Hindu residential and business premises in the metropolis which was the seat and centre of Hindu economic domination."*⁵⁰ The educated and wealthy *"Muslim refugees from all parts of India tended to make for the capital of Pakistan; and Sindh's commerce, industry, and administrative services seemed less handicapped by shortage of trained personnel than those in the other provinces."*⁵¹ Thus, with a high hand in government, these newcomers captured the most profitable means of production and became the owners of the industries, trade and commerce and most of the urban property. They constituted the Urdu-speaking refugees; the Punjabi refugees – of which, many were given

48. Khosla, G.D., *Stern Reckonings*, New Delhi, OUP, 1989, pp. 244-245.

49. Extracts from *Proletari*.

50. *The Sindhi Exodus*, p. 355.

51. Salim, Ahmad, *Pakistan aur Aqliattain*, Karachi, 2000.

ownership on the basis of claims in East Punjab and several purchased land; and the civil and military officers who had been rewarded with large tracts of irrigated agricultural land. The number of Muslims coming into the West Punjab from East Punjab considerably exceeded the numbers of non-Muslims who departed. Eventually, about a million of them had been diverted to Sindh. But, it also appeared as a sophisticatedly fabricated scheme by the top-seat government officials to render the Sindhis without a homeland of their own and establish a constituency of their own instead.

One month prior to the Constituent Assembly's declaration of Karachi as a 'federal area', the ministry of Ayub Khuhro was dismissed. Official sources said that he was deeply involved in corruption and misadministration. However, varied accounts existed about these charges. It was said that just before the dismissal, serious differences had arisen between Khuhro and the Governor of Sindh, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, because the latter had reallocated the portfolios without consulting or informing the former. His real 'crime', however, was intolerable. He had differed with the highest authorities on the issue of Karachi's separation from Sindh and was therefore thrown out.

The separation of Karachi from Sindh and its handing-over to the federal government was a great setback to the political and economic infrastructure of Sindh, particularly, as the benefits of the process of establishment of new industries did not trickle down the Sindhi people. Even the smallest of policies were formulated by the federal government, which, by that time had begun forming 'an invisible government.'⁵² G.M. Sayed also fought against Karachi's separation from Sindh. Though, he had supported the separation of Sindh from Bombay in his early political career. After his successful struggle for the separation of Sindh from Bombay in 1937, he joined the Muslim League and became so active that he had the Pakistan Resolution Passed in the Sindh Assembly - an act that he had been repenting throughout his life.

By the time Karachi was separated, some 25,000 Muslim employees of the Central Government had reached Karachi from Delhi and had nowhere to live. Moreover, despite being cold-shouldered by the Sindh government, about 150,000 refugees from East Punjab had arrived all over the province and spread communal tension of the worst kind. These refugees had neither any place to live nor any means of making a living for themselves. The Sindhis were apprehensive that if an end was not put to the ever-increasing influx of refugees, it might contribute to creating a majority of non-Sindhis in the province, and the avenues for the political, social and economic development of Sindhis would continue to remain closed.⁵³

52. Salim, Ahmad, "The Separation of Karachi from Sindh," *Pakistan of Jinnah, The Hidden Face*, Lahore, Brother Publishers, 1993, p.85.

53. Salim, Ahmad., *Pakistan aur Aqliattain*, p. 136.

Immediately after independence, three ministers were toppled within two years. As discussed earlier, on May 3, 1948, Pir Ilahi Bakhsh replaced Ayub Khuhro as minister. In February 1949, Yusuf Haroon formed a new ministry. In the same year, a draft communication was forwarded to the Speaker Sindh Legislative Assembly by G.M. Sayed, leader of the Sindh People's Front Assembly to be submitted as communication from the Assembly under rule 115 to the Governor of Sindh.

G.M. Sayed concluded in his revealing and thought provoking draft communication that the province of Sindh, from historical, geographical, economic, linguistic and cultural viewpoint constituted a distinct nationality.⁵⁴

As discussed earlier, the inter-communal harmony in Sindh was contrary to the situation in Punjab and the Hindus were not evacuating. But the pressure kept on increasing with the influx of migrants and more and more protest rose from Upper Sindh and week-by-week echoes of these protests mounted as the refugee mass moved southward. By December 1947, the volume of appeal from Sindh for protected mass evacuation of Hindus had become formidable,⁵⁵ as the government personnel imported *en masse* into Karachi. Hyderabad was engulfed by communal riots. Thirty people were killed and many wounded in the attacks on Hindus after which curfew was imposed. The violence was not merely materialistic in nature with the desire to grab Hindu property, but it was more spontaneous and was committed by refugees arriving from Ajmer, India in retaliation for the riots at Ajmer on December 6 and 14-15 (believed to have been perpetrated by Sindhi Hindu refugees on the local Muslims).

The Chief Minister Khuhro had announced during a press conference on November 13 that he would "...soon associate representatives of the Hindus with the administration of Sindh, and exchange views with the Congress members of the provincial assembly about the problems of the minorities." Then, addressing a dinner gathering in the Karachi Club on November 17 he said, "I am sure that those who left us did so in a hurry and must be feeling the pain of exile and regretting their decision. Therefore, we must do all that we can to get them to come back... if these sons of Sindh can come back we shall celebrate the occasion,"⁵⁶

That is why Grandma Leelan and many other Hindu families refused to go to India, although their homes were attacked in order to force them to migrate. In the words of Dadi Leelan, "At that time I had just graduated and was a music teacher in the training college. We were quite happy at the

54. Salim, Ahmad, "Sindh's Turmoil - A Document that was Ignored," *Pakistan of Jinnah, The Hidden Face*, Lahore, Brother Publishers, p. 89

55. *The Sindhi Exodus*, p. 356.

56. Salim, Ahmad, *Pakistan aur Aqliattain*, p. 136.

creation of Pakistan. For me it was as if the Muslims were becoming rulers again after the end of the Mughals. That era had been very good for the non-Muslims, particularly for the Hindus. As Pakistan was our home, the new era would be good for us too. We were now free. But very soon our optimism came to an end. Every evening the Muslim refugees would stone our houses and shout why weren't leaving and vacating the place for them. We got frightened. My brothers left for India, but my father refused to go away, and I decided to stay on with him. During those times the refugees would often be seen standing outside our house armed with sticks. They knew I was all alone in the house with my old father. I would sometimes ask them what they wanted, and they would say we should run away. But I was determined to stay on. I continued to teach in college and serve my country." 57

The inter-communal disturbance, which started with the import of refugees into Sindh, kept on mounting till it finally exploded in January 1948. The riots of January 6 were a first organized attempt of massacre and looting in the post-partition Sindh. Much has been said and written about it and quite naturally the details found variations in different accounts. In all these versions, two facts stand out. First, the attacks had come from just one group - the refugees, and that there had been no provocation of any kind from the Hindus and Nanak-Panthis (who, in the Punjab, are called Mona Sikhs, or beardless Sikhs). Second, the only reason for the attacks on non-Muslims was to create panic among the minorities, forcing them to flee from Sindh and in turn the perpetrators would grab their property.

There is some difference of opinion about how the riots started. For instance, Narayan Shahani says that before the attacks the refugees among the government employees had resorted to a pen-down strike. There are two eyewitnesses to the assault cases of January 6, in and around Pakistan Chowk, Karachi. According to them the spirit of amity among Hindus and Muslims in Sindh was so strong that many Hindus had themselves circumcised. These attacks absolutely destroyed this atmosphere of amity and understanding and obliged the Hindus to think in terms of migration. Apart from the terrible happenings in Hyderabad and Karachi, there were no other reports of communal riots or killings on a large scale anywhere in Sindh, but the violence in the two cities was sufficient to force the Hindus to decide on migration.

Sobho Gianchandani, a member of the Communist Party of Pakistan, who was not only a witness to the events of January 6 in Karachi, but was also actively associated with the later efforts to restore peace and sanity, while narrating his story, said, "*The muhajirs thought the Sindhi Muslims were not good, and that they (the refugees) would have to take things in their own hands. Something must be done to make the Hindus run*

57. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

away." 58 He asserts that when curfew was imposed from 2 p.m., some 300 people had been killed according to government estimates, and about 1100, if one went by the figures computed by the community. The intention was not to inflict wounds, but to kill. Along with other workers of the Communist Party, Sobho went around the city the next day and made frantic appeals for bringing back normalcy.

Sobho Gianchandani adds: *"On the night of January 5 at 10 p.m. a tailor comrade told some of us trade union workers that in the Mauladino musafirkhana, a meeting of desperate maulvis was held and it was decided that an atmosphere of terror should be created so that the Hindus should leave and vacate their houses. They were of the view that Sindhi Muslims were not self-respecting enough to force the Hindus to flee."* 59

So they had to leave Sindh and escape to India. Narayan Shahani told me that the *"Hindus had to leave Karachi in ships of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company. Sadhu Vaswani came to Karachi from Hyderabad. My father (K.D. Shahani) said to him that even if he went away this would prompt all other Hindus to depart. But Sadhu Vaswani had come determined to leave and had also brought along many Hindu families with the same intention."* 60

In the words of Mohan Kalpana, the eminent Sindhi writer, *"The immigrants from Bihar rioted and killed several people. Stray mobs headed towards Ratan Talao... Because of these riots perpetuated by the non-Sindhis there was great trepidation and alarm among the Hindus. And one day we also loaded our belongings on a camel and headed towards the Karachi Port... I wished to turn into a draught of wind and blow over the land, the houses, and the people of Sindh, kissing them; ... First I had the expectancy to go back. I don't know when this hope died. Now my only wish is to see Sindh..."* 61 A great sense of longing and suffering is found in most of the accounts. Mohan Kalpana adds that he wrote a letter to Jay Ram Das: *"You ask me to forget Sindh. During your governorship of Bihar, your ancestral ring fell in the pond while boating. On official expense you drained the pond to retrieve but a ring!! What had you lost? Just a ring - we have lost our homeland sain!"* 62

But the immigrants' accounts generally blackout the information. And if it is recorded, the incident is often depicted as a mischief of Hindus. In certain cases the information is provided but it has been given a very mild treatment and riots are shown to be lasting just few hours. Even, Maulvi Abdul Haque, known as Baba-i-Urdu (the father of Urdu), also

58. Sobho Gianchandani, interview with the author.

59. Salim, *Pakistan aur Aqliattain*, p. 136

60. *Ibid.* p. 139

61. Farooqi, Musharaf (tr.), Mohan Kalpana, *Excerpts from Ishq, Bhukh ain, Adab*. p. 22.

62. *Ibid.* p. 25.

misrepresented what actually happened in favour of *muhajirs*.⁶³

On the evening of January 6, Muslim mobs carried out a thoroughly organized looting of Hindu property in Karachi. "*Groups of thugs swooped simultaneously on Hindu neighbourhoods... Accounts of the operation by numerous victims agreed that there was little physical maltreatment, but the threatening attitude and the hearty curses of the looters were enough to induce the numbness of terror in the victims.*"⁶⁴

Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah was shocked at the turn of events. Addressing a gathering of Muslim refugees on January 9 he said, "*I understand the sentiments of the Muslim refugees and all those who have suffered trials and tribulations and sympathize with them. But they must control themselves and learn to acquire the ways of a responsible people. They should not take undue advantage of the hospitality extended to them, nor should they ignore the steps taken to ameliorate their plight. Once again I warn all Muslims against lawless elements and fifth columnists and urge them to protect their Hindu neighbours from the goondas responsible for the riots. They must create a sense of trust and security among the minorities.*"⁶⁵

Hundreds of thousand people residing in Sindh were forced, through communal riots, to leave their homes and hearths, to wander across the barren lands in search of rehabilitation. Communal riots and disturbances erupted in some other regions also which resulted in migration of people en-masse. In this political upheaval, Sindhi Hindus suffered a lot because, contrary to Punjab, they did not get any land compensation when they arrived in India. Whereas, the dreams of Sindhi Muslims, who had initiated and strongly pleaded for creation of Pakistan, were somewhat shattered into pieces immediately after independence. Mostly backward in the fields of education and technology, as compared to the increasing influx of Muslim immigrants, they could not gain much in terms of political power and employments in the administrative fields of Pakistan.

While Punjab and Bengal were given half of their states, the Sindhi community had to face the permanent scar of separation from their entire homeland. This suffering and deprivation, alienation and anguish, the sorrowful situation of Sindhis, who were deprived of their cultural, historical, geographical and sociological identity, became the subject matter of Sindhi poetry.⁶⁶

The 1947 partition issues have remained favourite themes for Sindhi writers in India and Pakistan. The main literary trends pertaining to partition problems revolve around the attainment of freedom along with communal

63. Haque, Maulvi Abdul, *Taqseem-e-Hind ke Fasadaat aur Anjuman ki Hijrat*, p. 187.

64. *The Sindhi Exodus*, p. 356.

65. Salim., *Pakistan aur Aqliattain*, p. 139.

66. Makhija, Menka Shivdasani, Arjan Shad Mirchandani, (ed.) *Freedom and Fissures*, New Delhi.

holocaust, the migration of Hindus from Sindh, their plight in resettlement camps, and their socio-economic and various other problems of rehabilitation.

Some of the important aspects of fictional writings pertaining to the theme of partition are: (1) sweet recollections of Sindh where the writer was born and he spent his childhood; (2) deep anguish due to loss of the native place; (3) the feeling of alienation and rootlessness in the new environments in India where the writer is resettled; (4) love for Sindhi heritage, culture and way of living; (5) strong efforts for preservation and development of Sindhi language, literature and culture in India; (6) sympathy for various movements of Sindhi Muslims in Sindh, who are fighting for their rights; and (7) humanitarian outlook, considering Sindhis as a single community.

Remarkably, the Sindhi writers rarely portrayed grim pictures of communal riots and disturbances; instead they have tried to establish communal harmony by portraying inter-communal marriages and sweet relations among Sindhis residing in India and Pakistan.

In a story entitled 'Claim', by Narayan Bharti, an old Sindhi man says, "I am Sindhi. The Sindh region belongs to me. I have every right to register a claim for getting it back." In another story 'Dastavez' (the property deed, 1952) he has reinforced the issue of Hindu-Muslim harmony and love of the homeland.⁶⁷

The partition proved to back a double-edged sword - as both those who left and those who stayed, felt the pain of separation. Popati Hiranandani bitterly observed that, "While Punjabi Hindus and Bengali Hindus received half of their land, Sindhi Hindus were rendered homeless..."

During the Indo-Pak war in 1965, the great Pakistani Sindhi poet Sheikh Ayaz was faced with a dilemma. He saw the Sindhi poet Narayan Shyam on the other side, and said,

Oh! this war...
In front of me I see Narayan Shyam!
We share the same hopes
and despairs,
The same speech and its lilt
How can I aim gun at him?
How can I shoot him down?
That, I should do this
Is something not possible?⁶⁸

The absence of large-scale violence made the Sindhis, experience of Partition different from that of the Punjabis and Bengalis. Among the Sindhi

67. Jetley, M.K., *Partition of India as Portrayed in Sindhi Literature*, p. 104.

68. Jotwani, Motilal, *Of Grass and Roots: An Indianist's Writings*, New Delhi: Sampark Prakashan, pp.204-205.

Hindus there was less disposition to panic because of violence, they panicked more because of measures adopted by the Sindhi Muslims wielding political power at the time shortly before and after the Partition. This anti-Hindu discrimination was perceived to be only a taste of the future. Many Hindus sent their families away, at least till the situation was resolved.

With the influx of refugees in Sindh, *Muhajir* Nationalism was promulgated and Sindhi culture and its indigenous people became handicapped in the hands of people from Punjab and India. *Muhajir* Nationalism was soon established as a symbol of bureaucratic, educational and cultural dominance. This initiated a cultural and political discrimination against Sindhis in Pakistan, which exists even to this day. However, it would have been a different story altogether if there had been unity amongst Sindhis themselves like, for instance, people of East Pakistan. Bengalis of all classes and backgrounds were united in their cause. If Sindhis were to unite like the Bengalis did, the nature and degree of the discrimination and problems that they face would change dramatically.

The other great setback Sindh received at the time was separation of Karachi from Sindh, when it was established as Federal capital on May 22, 1948. This was followed by another blow to Sindh when Sindh University was shifted from Karachi to Hyderabad, in other words, it was moved from the booming industrial centre to the old *chakra* (bull cart) culture. The next step was elimination of Sindhi language from Karachi schools.

The plight of minorities is a chronic issue in Pakistan. Sindh even today has a significant population of the Hindu community as compared to other provinces of the country. These are people who generally did not leave Sindh at the time of Partition due to economic compulsions. Amongst them the urban business class is in a far more miserable condition than the Bhils, Kolis, etc. of the Thar area. Their misery could be justifiable in terms that Sindhis in general are treated as second-class citizens, and as Sindhi Hindus, they are treated as third-class citizens. The bitter feelings of Sindhi Muslims towards the pre-partition *banias* add to the communal friction in the province.

In 1955, the One-Unit scheme ignited a wave of fury among the Sindhi population, particularly among the student, intellectual and peasant classes. They had staged province-wide agitation only to be met with merciless resistance by the authorities. The abolition of the provinces under the garb of so called parity, was aimed at capturing the economic and political life of small provinces, Sindh being the most prosperous and holding an enormous promise for the future. During the agitation against One-Unit, countless Sindhis were detained and many were prosecuted. Unmoved by them, the Khuhro leadership implemented the most hated scheme on October 14, 1955.

However, One-Unit scheme could not last long. In the wake of the

dissolution of One Unit, demands for the rectifying many of the wrongs of that era grew intensely in the smaller provinces. One of these demands was the restoration of the status of Sindhi as the provincial language of Sindh. Sindhi language had enjoyed this status since 1851, but it had been eroded by a series of government actions after the creation of Pakistan. The newly elected provincial government of Mumtaz Ali Bhutto moved a bill in Sindh Assembly in July 1972 for the promotion of the Sindhi language, without prejudice to the status of the national language, Urdu. However, *"...so much mistrust had already developed between the two communities in the previous two years over this question that leaders of the Urdu-speaking community were not willing to accept anything less than a 'bi-lingual' province."*⁶⁹ Riots broke out in the province even before the bill had actually passed. Although intervention by the then President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the passage of a supplement bill helped cool the passions momentarily, these riots did an irreparable damage to inter-community relations in Sindh and the basis of Pakistan's unity. July 1972 had essentially been the re-enactment of the language controversy scenario of 1952 in East Bengal.

During the Bhutto regime Sindhis received compensation with an exception to Sindhi writers, intellectuals and political workers, who were harshly suppressed. However, for securing political legitimacy General Zia-ul-Haq added fuel to the fire of ethnic violence in Sindh. To this day, Sindh is suffering the aftermath of General Zia's regime.

In the conflict between Sindhis and Urdu-speakers, the latter must accept their new Sindhi identity in letter and in spirit. But if all that is taken too mechanically, if no allowance is made for the logistical difficulties and human failings, and if the resistance of a minority of diehard Urdu-bigots is answered by a particularism, which attempts to stem the logical growth of Urdu, then such a movement will, in the final analysis, prove to be utterly reactionary and self-defeating. If the Sindhi middle class fails to recognize the dialectics of the productive forces in society and opposes the development of Urdu as a threat to purity of Sindh, it would essentially be working for feudal restoration in Sindh. Consequently, tightening its chains. The trend of Sindhi nationalism, like that of any other nationalism, is class collaborationist. Because where it speaks against the injustices meted out to Sindhis as a whole, it conveniently overlooks the injustice and humiliation meted out every day to Sindhi peasants. Even on the cultural question the Sindhi feudal politicians have betrayed the Sindhi masses again and again.

As regards resolving the fate of *Muhajir* separatism, MQM (Muhajir Qaumi Movement) had its susceptibilities, which called for the ability of the state to manipulate the political process, the attitude of other

69. Ahmad, Feroz, "The Language Question in Sindh," *Regional Imbalances and the National Question in Pakistan*, Vanguard, 1992, p. 139.

ethnic groups towards *Muhajir* nationalism and, above all, the capacity of the *Muhajir* community to eschew its sense of self-righteousness. However, the ice has started melting. Muhajir Qaumi Movement has changed its name to Muthida Qaumi Movement. It will be too early to denounce it as 'just a change in name' without allotting some grace period to the organization to demonstrate its shift from self-righteousness. Muthida has recognized the reality of Sindh and is facilitating integration. The organization is doing some serious thinking to respect and acknowledge the historical rights of the Sindhis.

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THE ANTECEDENT OF A VILLAGE OF THE PUNJAB

Kuldip Singh*

Historians working on the history of rural India are interested in social and economic change. However, they have usually been confronted with paucity of source materials. This does not mean that available published and unpublished materials are inadequate. Numerous official commissions and committees have produced gigantic reports dealing with rural conditions in India. The Famine Commission Reports are probably the best known nineteenth century examples. Similarly the Royal Commission on agriculture is one of the most important sources in the beginning of the twentieth century. There is a massive statistical data of all-India coverage, most of which date from the 1880's, including the census and the annual compilations of statistics on agriculture, irrigation, education, and the like.¹

The primary focus of this article is to know the antecedent of a village Jonsh in tehsil Ajnala, district Amritsar. There are two categories of source material about the foundation of the village and its nomenclature. These are the summary settlements regarding the village up to the *bandobast* of 1891-92 and the oral history. The *bandobasts* are also called settlements. The historical background of the village has been constructed on the basis of written document from *Sadr qanungo* office attached with the *bandobast* of 1891-92 which is inadequate, thereby obliges us to depend on the oral traditions which had its own limitations.

The paradigms followed by the scholars on the village studies are partly inadequate to be applied to the study of this village. Let us first have a bird's eye-view of some of these works. Several historians and anthropologists have contributed towards village studies. F.G. Bailey's *Caste and Economic Frontier* (1958) had indicated the possibilities of evaluating the impact of economic changes in the world on a remote village in Orissa. The hypothesis was that the opening of Suez Canal in 1869 contributed significantly towards changes in production at the level as far as the remote areas of rural India.²

Mckim Marriott's work *Village India* (1969) signifies the impact of administrative and economic changes in a village of Bihar. Marriott emphasized on the upward social mobility among the lower castes as a consequence of the above changes. He has underlined this in one of his

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1. Tom G. Kessinger, *Vilyatpur 1848-1968, Social and Economic Change in North Indian village*, University of California Press. 1974, p-1

2. Bailey, F.G., *Caste and Economic Frontier- A Village in highland Orissa*, OUP, Bombay, 1958.

articles entitled 'Changing Status of Depressed Classes.'³ Oscar Lewis's study of Rampur, a village in Haryana, is another anthropological study which has demonstrated the linkages between normative pressures and changes in social and economic sphere at the village level.⁴ Tom G. Kessinger's *Vilyatpur, 1848-1968*, published in 1974 has been recognized as a path-breaking work in village studies. This is the only work of its kind which takes into account the processes like the effects of the introduction of technology, commercialization of agriculture, migration from rural to urban areas and urbanization. This work studies changes in depth by employing the method of Sociologists and Anthropologists. Kissinger used sources which ranged from village records, census and settlement reports to other official and unofficial accounts.⁵

The village Jonsh in tehsil Ajnala in Amritsar district is situated in the north-western part of the state in the Upper Bari-Doab, a territory situated between Beas and Ravi rivers. The village is in the *Majha* tract, now forming the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur, once ruled by *Manjh* ⁶ Rajputs. It lies to the south-west of Ajnala at a distance of 9 kms. and to the north-west of Amritsar district at a distance of 25 kms. The international boundary is only 22 kms. to its west. Approximately it lies within the latitudes 29.30' to 31.38 north and longitudes 73.55' to 76.50' east in the Indus plain of northern India. The entire area is a flat alluvial plain.⁷ In the present context Jonsh is a small village with an area of 738 acres out of which 654 acre is under cultivation and rest is uncultivable which also includes *abadi deh*.⁸ The number of houses being 130 in total and of the number of households is equal to 137.⁹

Although the village under study was included in the first settlement of 1852¹⁰, yet it never came in official use till the publication of

3. McKim Marriott, *Village India, Studies in the little Community*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1969.
4. Lewis Oscar, *Village Life in Northern India*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1958.
5. Tom G. Kissinger, *Vilyatpur 1848-1968*, Social and economic change in North Indian Village. University of California Press. 1974.
6. The *manjh* were the most widely distributed of all the sub-montane Rajputs. They held the south western portion of the Jalandhar and the north western portion of the Ludhiana district, and are to be found in all the adjoining districts of the state. Sir James M. Douie *Punjab Settlement Manual*, 1915, p-161.
7. Amritsar district *Gazetteer*, 1883-84.
8. *Lal Kitab-Village Abstract Note Book*.
9. District Census handbook 1991, pp. 534-35.
10. The settlement reports were prepared by the revenue officers just before the annexation of Punjab in 1849. Nearly the whole of the Punjab, west of the Beas, with the exception of the districts included in the governorship of Diwan Sawan Mal and his successor Diwan Mul Raj, was summarily settled in the winter of 1847-48 by the assistants of the residents at Lahore. The work was done hastily by young officers with no previous settlement experience, with no measurements to help them, and with only such local knowledge as they could gain in the course of hurried tours. The districts, which had not been assessed before the outbreak of the Second Sikh War (1848-49), were put under summary settlement shortly after annexation. This began in 1851. In 1852 and the next few years it became necessary to revise the settlements in districts in which the operations of the first regular settlement had not been started.

the settlement of 1865. However, the traditions¹¹ of this settlement give us information about the land owners, type of irrigation, land revenue, land mortgage, rent & batai-rent, and migration etc, of this village. Moreover, the *sajra nasib* gives the genealogical tables of the families especially the land owning classes (the Jats & the Brahmans). Therefore, this document is the first¹² recorded evidence of this village.

Nevertheless, the traditions of 1865 were silent about the foundation of this village. It was the fifth regular settlement of 1891-92 along with *sajra nasib* & *jamabandi* includes a document which fills up the gap and at the same time even this document was based on oral & unanimous statements of all the people of the village at that time. According to this document history of this village goes back approximately 527 years (i.e 1346 A.D.) back. The narration of the founding of the village is as follows: Long period had passed that a Muslim Sri Jaj of *gotra* Gill had migrated from Malwa region (*Malwa* of Punjab) and found this deserted jungle worthy of cultivation and with the permission of the then ruler¹³ occupied it. For three hundred years, the descendants of the founder continued to occupy this village. Unfortunately some old ruler¹⁴ invaded and due to his outrage the people of this village ran away to the nearby area. The village laid waste for fifty years. After that the inhabitants of this village came back and occupied their respective strips of land.

Regarding the structure of the village community, it is very interesting to note that the village had two *tarafs*: *taraf Jatan* and *taraf Brahmana* (the Jats and the Brahmans), the only land-owning castes of the village when this document was written. *Taraf* was a subdivision of an estate (here village). The references to these two *tarafs* are very important as they suggest that the history of the village was older than the written document of 1865. *Taraf Jatan* was the common feature of the village settlement whereas *taraf Brahmana* was a specific case in the sense that there were a few villages in which Brahmans formed their own *tarafs*. This second *taraf*, the *taraf Brahmana*, was named after their *kaum* (religion) and hence became popular by this name.

It seems that in the initial stage of the formation of this village *taraf Brahmana* was not in existence. It came into existence in the second phase of the colonization of this village. It was after fifty years of resettlement that Sri Bhagi, of *kaum* Brahman, *gotra kumandri* formed his *taraf*. The *taraf*

11. These traditions were related with the *shamlat* land, production of land, duties of *lambardar*, water disputes, usages of ponds, growing trees on the owners as well as *shamlat* land and the legal rights related to them, land of religious places and the rights of non landed castes.

12. At Pehowa (Pilgrimage centre), the first entry was of 1810 A.D.

13. The information is inadequate as the document does not mention the name of the ruler with whose permission the original inhabitants occupied the village.

14. Unfortunately the written source does not cite the whereabouts of the invader.

Brahmana states us a very historical phase of relationship between the Sikhs and the Hindus. It implies that the Brahmins used to perform rituals and customs related to birth, marriage and death. In other words they were the priests of the village community. It was most probably due to this reason that owner of *Patti Aarak* Hardit Singh assigned a piece of land to Kanshi Ram from his own ownership. It was the settlement of 1865 when the *tarafs*, the *patties* and the *dheries* were registered against the names of the individuals.

In the beginning, there were six *patties* namely *Bahlol*, *Natha*, *Aarak*, *Daud*, *Versi* and *Sohan*. The nomenclature of these *patties* excepting *Sohan* tell us that agriculturists were Muslims by faith. There is a possibility that these *patties* were named after the founding families. *Bahlol* had three sons namely *Bakhta*, *Basu* and *Roopa*. With the passage of time, land holdings got fragmented into *dheries* (a subdivision of *Patti*). *Bahlol* being a *Patti*, as mentioned above, had a subdivision of *dheri*. It (*Bahlol*) had three *dheris* named after *Bakhta*, *Basu* and *Roopa*. These were again registered against the names of their owners and the names of these *dheries* became popular subsequently.

Surprisingly, the *bandobast* (right from 1865) of 1891-92 does not directly mention the presence of *kamins*. It was largely due to the fact that revenue officials presupposed the very existence of *kamins*. In fact, right from the beginning of agricultural activities the cultivators/zamindars took the help of *kamins* who provided both skilled and unskilled labour. The traditions mentioned along with the *bandobast* of 1865 & 1891-92 give a reference about the *kamins* of the village under study. Generally speaking, they constructed their residence far away from the *tarafs* of agriculturists. *Kamins* had their separate well for drinking water. Although their interaction was limited yet the number of *kamins* and the number of agriculturist families had corresponding relations.

The *bandobast* of 1891-92 does recognize the presence of *kamins* when it says that the latter started coming to the village after the village was colonized for the second time. They also had similar movements like agriculturists. There is a possibility that one or two families of the *kamins* moved along with the ancestors of their village. There is another possibility that after their own settlement, the agriculturists of this village, as the custom was, asked the *kamins* to come and stay in the same village. The *kamins* also included the agricultural labourers. The dominant among them were the *mazhbi* Sikhs as the oral history makes us believe.

According to the tradition of the settlement of 1891-92 the ancestors of this village happen to be Muslim *zamindars* of Gill *gotra*. Till this date, the *zamindars* of the same *gotras* comprise major agriculturalist community of this village. However, when and how Muslim *zamindars* of Gill *gotra* became Sikh *zamindars*, is not stated by the traditions of the above mentioned settlement. This is a major historical grey area which

requires a further enquiry. There is an interesting version of the agriculturists¹⁵ of this village which states that in addition to the *zamindars* of the Gill *gotra* there were *zamindars* known as *Kharral*. According to Ibbetson¹⁶ *Kharral* was a minor land owning and agricultural caste. They were found in the western plains of Punjab and perhaps belonged to a Rajput tribe who subsequently recorded themselves as *Jats*.

The oral history regarding the foundation of the village is narrated as follow: Before ultimately settling at this village, the ancestors of this village faced very hard time when they left *Malwa* region and tried to find out a suitable place where they could rehabilitate themselves. It is stated that at some places, perhaps in the *Malwa* region they settled but temporarily either due to the local hostile environment of the scarcity of water. They ultimately moved from *Malwa* to *Majha* region. When they reached *chhambh*,¹⁷ which is west of the village, they did not know how to overcome the hindrances posed by the bushes which were perhaps too thick to allow entry of human being. In the revenue record there is mention of *Bechirag*¹⁸ (land attached to the *Chhambh*). The similar *Bechirag* land was attached to the *Bhambri*.

When they were in a fix, as the story further tells us, a *fakir* appeared who was riding on a mare. The harassed people (ancestors) requested the *fakir* to help them to settle at a proper place. Acceding to their request, the *fakir* asked them to follow him. When *fakir* entered the present locality of this village, from its east side his turban got hooked in the thorns of acacia plants and fell down. Meanwhile, *fakir's* mare urinated and excreted at the spot. *Fakir* asked the people to settle over there. The turbans of the invaders would fell in the same manner as *fakir's* own turban fell off. *Fakir* prophesized that the invaders would disperse.

Following the age old custom, some of the ancestors offered barley to the *fakir* as fodder for his mare. Since barley is known as *Jon* in Punjabi language, this settlement eventually came to be known as *Jonsh*. This popular narrative of founding this village is corroborated by the eldest people of this village who confirm that this village was known for the barley crop.¹⁹

15. Hazara Singh Kharral s/o Udam Singh, aged 74 years is now a major agriculturist having 33 acres land which compared with the rest of the agriculturists of the village is a big *jagir*.

16. Denzil Ibbetson, Punjab Castes, Neeraj Publishing House, Delhi, 1984, p-174.

17. *Chhambh* was a marshy land.

18. Name of the person is Harbans Singh who served British army and fought Second World War and later adopted farming. He is aged 90 years.

19. A person of village Padri Kalan near Sur Singh in Tarn Taran tehsil was interviewed. His name is Atma Ram and belonged to *Sansi* caste. He is aged 99 years. He used to visit the village once in a year. He is called *dada*. He used to recite orally about the foundation of the village and even the genealogy of the whole village is being remembered by him orally.

However, the bards of this area tell us a different version as stated in the traditions of the settlement of 1891-92. According to oral history of the bards, the ancestors of this village belonged to Mallanwala village in district Ferozepur. Under some circumstances they were forced to migrate from this village and reached at Moga. After sometime they left Moga for a village Katohi (now in Pakistan). Nevertheless, the village Katohi could not meet their basic requirements and they left for village Kakar in Ajnala tehsil in district Amritsar. From Kakar they shifted to *Chhambh* as mentioned above. From there they shifted to Bhambri which was in the north of this village. From there they settled at the present place ultimately.²⁰

An interesting feature is that there is no such village that is known by this name in any three regions of Punjab (*Majha, Doaba, Malwa*) which gives us a clue that ancestors of this village did not have their own original village before settling at this place. On the contrary there are several villages in the different districts of the present Punjab which have the common names.²¹

The settlement of 1891-92 specifically mentions that the name of this village Jonsh originated from the name of Jonsh mound which was colonized by the agriculturists in fourteenth century excepting for fifty years after the founding of this village was never laid waste by any invader during the medieval times.

The ultimate settlement of the ancestors of this village indicates those primary factors which were essential for the rehabilitation of a particular area (village). These factors comprise productivity of the land and the availability of the water resources in the pre-British time. It was perhaps under the British rule when the artificial means of irrigation (canals) were made available to the rural community.

During the Sikh rule, we have more specific definition about this village. According to the settlement records the village was a *jagir* of Raja Teja Singh (most probably Dogra ruler). Unfortunately the revenue record does not state the definite background of this Raja. However, it is said that after deducing his expenses of one third share the *Jagirdar* gave the rest of the revenue to the government. In addition to this we have more details. It is stated that he collected Rs.8 for sugarcane and Rs.4 for cotton crop per *ghumao*²² from the agriculturists of the village.

Before the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 the land as being

20. *Bechirag* (A village where no lamp burns) meant that no population inhabits but cultivation is done. And this is a name given to a village. Sometimes between two villages lies a belt which is called *Bechirag* village. Both the villages have their land there.
21. Another feature which was analyzed while studying the death record at Kesgarh Sahib that there are many villages in the Punjab which have their names common in all the three regions of Punjab i.e. *Majha, Doaba* and *Malwa*. But I could not find any other village with this name, i.e. Jonsh.
22. *Ghumao* is a measure of an area equal to four Kanals i.e. half of an acre.

cultivated by a person(s) remained under his ownership. In the casual settlement the order remained the same i.e. no change was made in the system of the ownership but in regular settlement the cultivable land was recorded under the heading of ownership but the uncultivable land was registered as *Shamlat Deh*. The *shamlat* ownership was divided into two parts, one part being irrigated by well was recorded with the village and the second part was given to the adjoining village *Mohar*.

In the year 1869, the division *Shamlat Deh* was made a category. Earlier *Shamlat Deh* was the common land of whole village and later it was allotted *taraf-wise* and *patti-wise* and the land revenue was fixed on it accordingly. Further fragmentation of the remaining *Shamlat Deh* was not possible. Nevertheless, division of the land of the village under study was based upon the custom of *Chunda Vand*.²³

Under the British rule we notice some changes in terms of the ownership of the village land as well as the mode of the revenue to be paid by the cultivators to the state. Before we take up these details it is essential to point out here that the then rulers (Sikhs as well as British) took a fixed share of the produce accepting the cash crop like sugarcane and cotton. On the cash crops state summarily assessed revenue in cash. Whereas in the case of other crops the state collected its share in the produce at the threshing floor in the presence of the local revenue officials.

As per the permanent settlement, the British assessed the revenue on the basis of productivity of the land and water advantages. There were two types of irrigation - one by the well and the second by the canal. The revenue could be reassessed periodically with reference to sinking of wells. Whenever new wells were sunk the rate of revenue was generally reduced taking into account the cost of the well incurred by the agriculturists. If the settlement was made permanent and new wells were not assessed, some inequality would rise, but in view of the lightness of the water-advantage revenue this was not a matter of great importance and in any case it could be obviated by re-distributing the *abiana* every five years over all wells at work. Many new wells would be sunk, and in this way the *abiana* would become lighter and lighter. But, if government was not ready to accept forever the reduction of revenue involved in its proposals, it could gradually be recovered by assessing new wells with the circle *abiana* rate after a short period of exemption. The *abiana* on wells falling out of use was remitted and might remain unchanged for fifty years.²⁴

23. *Chunda* means hair (of a girl or a woman) dressed into a braid. Therefore, *Chundavand* is a custom division based on woman i.e. If a man has two wives, one with four sons and other has two sons, then the land will be equally divided, first between two wives and then between their children. The fewer members (sons) will have more shares. The second custom of inheritance was *pagvand* under which sons by different wives inherit equal shares in land, the property being divided per capita.

24. Sir James M. Douie, *Punjab Settlement Manual*, 3rd edition, Lahore, printed by Supdt., Govt. Printing, Punjab, 1915, pp. 29-30.

The structure of the land revenue of the village was as follows: As per the settlement of 1852 the land revenue Rs. 621 was fixed on an annual rent basis for two years. For *chahi*²⁵ land Rs.2 and 4 *annas* and for *Barrani*²⁶ Rs.2 per *Ghumao* were proposed. Later on in the regular settlement of 1865 Rs. 602 was fixed annually and a remittance of Rs.19 was proposed for a period of 20 years.

In the wake of this background, the land revenue in the *bandobast* of 1893 was fixed at Rs.1025 out of which Rs. 102 was from *chahi* land and Rs. 186 and 10 *annas* were from *nehri* land. The average was mentioned as that 1 *anna* per *kanal* and the total revenue from *Barrani* land was Rs.737 and 6 *annas*. This was mentioned as *khata-wise*, *patti-wise* and *dheri-wise* and it would be paid as such.

In the post-mutiny period, the British officials revised their revenue policy in order to promote agriculture production and trade. After the measurement of the land a total remittance of Rs. 104 out of Rs.625 was fixed and was deposited in the government treasury by the *Lambardar* (the document of the village mentions as such). The British officials came to realize the exact hardships faced by the peasantry particularly in incurring a huge amount on the irrigation. They also apprehended that if such situation continued there could be another upheaval in the Punjab province. Therefore, they wanted to keep the peasantry contented. They assessed the land revenue leniently and this village was no exception to this assessment.

Briefly speaking, the antecedent of this village partially originates from oral history and partially from the revenue records. Interestingly in the case of this village both sources are complementary to each other. Nevertheless, the inadequacies in regard to the social structure and the revenue structure of the community of this village are largely filled up by the revenue records systematically prepared by the British. Moderation in the revenue structure suggests that British were concerned about the contentment of the village community lest it could culminate into political trouble in the post-mutiny period.

25. *Chahi* land was irrigated by well.

26. *Barrani* land depend on rain fall.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN PUNJAB: PRE AND POST LIBERALISATION PERIOD

Balbir Singh*

India joined the wave of globalisation in 1991 in the hope that she would get rid of many problems e.g. very low level of foreign exchange reserves, increasing the efficiency of Indian firms by encouraging competition with foreign firms, shortage of capital to be fulfilled by FDIs, problem both of internal and external indebtedness, etc. According to New Strategy industrialization should take place in such a way where capital and technology can move freely without any restrictions like tariff, etc. in any part of the world (N.Vinaykam, 1995, p 41). There are some other important reasons for the third world for joining the globalisation process, e.g. (i) failure of public sector to attain commanding heights due to various reasons (Bagchi, 1986, p.118; Dandekar, 1994, p.1461), willing to create competitive environment by market forces (ADB, 1995, p. 144); to avail of superior technology (GOI, 1991, P.4). etc. On the other hand there are some views that do not support globalisation on certain reasons. Due to the market oriented development and increasing emphasis on efficiency the large and medium industrial units in manufacturing sector have adopted capital intensive techniques which have resulted in the displacement of labour (NCL, Vol II, p.117). The use of capital intensive technique by MNCs is against the factor endowments of developing countries and so increases their already severe problem of unemployment (Lall Sanjay and Paul Streeten, 1977). It is not new to have global trade but what is new is the objective of capitalist globalisation (Forbel, 1980, pp. 12, 45-46; Nayyar, 1995, p.12). Globalisation of production or location of multi-plants of a single firm in countries found appropriate is rooted in the development of capitalism (Marx and Engels, 1997, p.46). An important contradiction in the present globalisation process is that on the one hand free movement of commodities is advocated, on the other hand free movement of human labour is being discouraged, even prevented (Oommen, 1995, p.254). Since North-West is an integral part of India, we have tried to know the effects of the New Economic Policy, formulated under the globalisation process on this region.

Some economic and social indicators have been taken to know the development of North-West India with special reference to Punjab and Haryana under the New Economic Policy Regime.

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So far the growth of number of Industries is concerned, it is clear from the Table-1 that during 1980 to 1990 the annual average compound growth rate came to be 4.92 per cent which declined to 1.92 per cent during the globalisation period (1990-2001). But in case of Haryana this growth rate turned out to be higher in the post-liberalisation period as compared to the pre-liberalisation period.

Regarding employment it is clear from the information given in the table that growth rate of employment declined from 6.18 per cent in pre-liberalisation period to 2.32 per cent only in post-liberalisation period. But in case of Haryana during the same period the employment growth rate has increased from 4.41 per cent to 6.79 per cent.

So far as the growth rate of number of working small scale industries is concerned the average annual compound growth rate came down from 13.98 per cent in the pre-reforms period to merely 2.26 per cent in the liberalisation period in Punjab as is shown by the Table-2. But this growth rate of fixed capital has sharply decreased from 15.04 per cent in the pre-liberalisation period to merely 1.79 per cent in the Liberalisation Period. Moreover, the growth rate of employment in the small sector has decreased from 9.71 per cent to 2.99 per cent during the given two periods. This all shows that the small industry of Punjab suffered heavily in the context of these three indicators. Almost the same situation prevails in the context of large / medium industrial sector except in the context of number of units where a small increase took place during pre and post reforms period as is depicted by the table.

If we go by the growth of gross state domestic product (GSDP) we find that the GSDP growth rate in Punjab declined from 5.7 per cent during pre-liberalisation period to 5.0 per cent in the post-liberalisation period as indicated by Table - 3. This growth rate in the same period has also declined in Haryana. But in some states like Karnataka, Maharashtra, etc. this growth rate increased during the given period. This shows that a major difference in the growth rates has emerged where the states like Punjab and Haryana lagged behind in the context of their growth rates with the implementation of New Economic Policy. This indicates the uneven development, a feature of rising capitalism.

The growth of net state domestic product in Punjab and Haryana has been shown in Table-4. It is clear that the percentage average growth rate was higher between 1993-94 and 2000-01 in Punjab (2.9) than in Haryana (1.72) in the context of primary sector. But in case of secondary sector this growth rate was found to be higher in Haryana (6.78) as compared to Punjab (4.81). Moreover, in the tertiary sector the growth rate again came to higher in Haryana (8.71) than in Punjab (5.27). On the whole the growth rate of Net State Domestic Product turned out to be higher at 5.14 per cent in Haryana. This may be due to the proximity of some parts of Haryana to Delhi, an island

of development, a significant characteristic of a capitalist development.

The growth rate of fixed capital in Punjab also gives a dismal picture. The average annual compound rate of fixed capital was as high 15.42 per cent in the pre-liberalisation period of 1980-81 to 1990-91 but during the liberalisation period of 1990-91 to 2000-01 the rate came down to 3.82 per cent. This basically happened due to the lack of demand for the products of many industries because of the competition with the easy availability of the products of MNCs/their affiliates during the liberalisation period as is revealed by our another survey of electronics industries in Punjab where most of the units closed/slowed down their production.

If we go by the growth rates in some selected sectors in Punjab we find that the growth rate which was 7.83 per cent between 1980-81 to 1990-91 came down to 1.75 per cent during the liberalisation period as is depicted in the Table-6. But in the context of sports goods industry it was 7.47 per cent in the pre-liberalisation period which came down to -2.81 per cent during the liberalisation period. The same table shows this declining trend in case of fertilizer, scientific & surgical instruments, hand tools and cycle and cycle parts industries. It is notable that the growth rate in cycle and cycle parts industry came down to 1.27 per cent in the liberalisation period from 9.24 per cent in the pre-liberalisation period in Punjab. However, automobile parts is the only industry in our sample where the growth rate of employment has increased to 9.02 per cent during the liberalisation period from 4.79 per cent during the pre-liberalisation period.

The growth rates of per capita income during liberalisation period have been given in Table-7. Among the states of North-West region the growth rate of per-capita income came to be the highest in case of Himachal Pradesh (4.82 per cent) followed by Haryana (3.73 per cent) and further followed by Punjab, 2.31 per cent. The state of Jammu and Kashmir experienced the lowest (1.74 per cent) in the North-Western region. This shows that Punjab, which otherwise topped the region in per capita income, lagged behind in growth rate of per capita income under the policy of liberalisation. To be brief, it can be said that the growth rates of number of factories and employment declined in the liberalisation period as compared with that of the pre-liberalisation period in Punjab but these growth rates have increased both in number of factories and employment in Haryana during the same period. Besides this, the growth rates of number of units, fixed capital and employees decreased during the given period both in the small scale and large / medium sectors in Punjab with one exception of number of units in large / medium sector. Regarding the performance of Punjab and Haryana in terms of GSDP both states experienced decline in the liberalisation period. Moreover, Haryana observed higher growth rates both in secondary and tertiary sectors in Punjab, while it was reverse in case of primary sector, during the liberalisation period. Moreover, the rate of growth

of fixed capital in Punjab fell sharply during the liberalisation period as compared to the pre-liberalisation period. Besides, during the growth rates of employment in all the selected industries, with one exception, declined. Moreover, if we take the inter-state comparison in the growth of per capita income in North-West region, we can note that Himachal topped and Jammu and Kashmir experienced the lowest growth rate.

On the whole it can be concluded that the growth rates of domestic product, number of factories, per capita income and employment decreased during the liberalisation period as compared to the pre-liberalisation period revealing the negative effect of Liberalisation Policy on the Punjab economy.

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Table-1

Growth rates of no. of Registered Working Factories and of Employment therein in Punjab & Haryana.

Year	Punjab		Haryana	
	No. of Factories	Employment No	No. of Factories	Employment No
1980	7053	201735	3176	175025
1990	11396 (4.92)*	367513 (6.18)	4813 (4.24)	269411 (4.41)
2001	13784 (1.92)	462067 (2.32)	8804 (6.22)	519613 (6.79)

Source : Compiled/calculated from Government of Punjab Statistical Abstract of Punjab (2002) and Government of Haryana, Statistical Abstract (2002-03).

* Figures in Parentheses indicate the annual percentage compound growth rates.

Table-2
**Growth in Working Small Scale and Large/
 Medium Industries in Punjab.**

Year	No. of units	Small scale units		Large/medium units		
		Fixed capital (Rs. crores)	Employed No.	No. of units	Fixed Capital (Rs. crores)	No. of Employees
1980-81	43,338	332.12	2,64,869	228	727.42	1,09,769
1990-91	1,60,368 (13.98)*	1,348.78 (15.04)	6,68,845 (9.71)	373 (5.05)	4,003.08 (18.59)	1,87,311 (5.49)
2000-01	2,00,603 (2.26)	4,109.14 (1.79)	8,97,642 (2.99)	629 (5.36)	16,435.07 (15.17)	2,29,626 (2.06)

Source :- Compiled/calculated from Government of Punjab, Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2002.

* Figures in brackets show percentage annual average compound growth rates.

Table-3
Performance of State Economies in India

State	Average Annual Growth Rates of GSDP (per cent)	
	1980-90	1993-99
Punjab	5.7	5.0
Haryana	6.3	5.6
Karnataka	5.7	8.1
Maharashtra	6.3	7.7

Source : Central Statistical Organisation, Government of India, New Delhi, Quoted in Raghbendra Jha (ed.), *Indian Economic Reforms*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York. (2003).

* GSDP data based on constant prices of 1993-94.

Table-4
Net State Domestic Product at Factor Cost Sector-Wise At
constant prices (1993-94) in Punjab and Haryana

Sector	Punjab		Haryana	
	1993-94	2000-01	1993-94	2000-01
Primary	13055.06 (2.09)*	15408.35	8315.72	9546.22 (1.72)
Secondary	5365.10	7814.78 (4.81)	4931.31	7412.35 (6.78)
Tertiary	8647.40	13038.11 (5.27)	6174.52	12040.17 (8.71)
Total Net State Domestic Product	2767.56	36261.24 (3.72)	19421.55	28998.74 (5.14)

Source : Compiled/calculated from (a) Government of Punjab, Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2002.

(b) Government of Haryana, Statistical Abstract of Haryana, 2002-03.

*Figures in Parentheses indicate the average annual compound growth rate.

Table-5
Growth Rates of Fixed Capital in Registered working
factories in Punjab

Year	Fixed capital (Rs. in lacs)
1980-81	1,35,035
1990-91	5,66,733 (15.42)*
2000-2001	8,24,445 (3.82)

Source : Compiled/calculated from Government of Punjab, Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2002.

* Figures in parentheses indicate percentage annual average compound Growth Rates.

Table -6
Growth of Employment in Selected Industries in Punjab

Year	Nos.						
	Sewing machine & parts	Sports goods	Fertilizer	Auto-mobile parts	Scientific & surgical instruments	Hand tools	Cycle & cycle parts
1980-81	4,948	4242	4630	12,475	1,980	6527	5178
1990-91	10,516 (7.83)*	8,716 (7.47)	5412 (1.57)	19,914 (4.79)	2,809 (3.55)	9342 (3.65)	12,527 (9.24)
2000-2001	12,511 (1.75)	6553 (-2.81)	5560 (0.27)	47,262 (9.02)	3419 (1.98)	11,980 (2.52)	14,206 (1.27)

Source : Compiled/Calculated from Government of Punjab, Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2002.

* Figures in Parentheses show the annual average compound growth rates in percentage.

Table -7
Per-Capita Income in Selected States in India
(At constant prices, Base 1993-94)

State	1993-94	2000-2001
Punjab	12710	14916 (2.31)*
Haryana	11090	14331 (3.73)
Himachal Pradesh	7870	10942 (4.82)
Jammu & Kashmir	6543	7383 (1.74)
Goa	16558	26106 (6.72)
Maharashtra	12183	15172 (3.18)
All India	7690	10306 (4.27)

Source : Government of Punjab, Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2002, p. 135.

* Figures in Parentheses show the average annual percentage compound growth rates between 1993-94 and 2000-2001.

BOOK REVIEW-I

***Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, by Ziauddin Barani, Persian text edited by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan; reprint published by Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, 2005; pages 10+602+56; price Rs. 720/-.**

Students of the history of the Delhi Sultanate are intimately familiar with a line of distinguished chronicles, which extends from Hasan Nizami's *Taj-ul-Maasir* to Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabqat-i-Akbari*. However Ziauddin Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* is undoubtedly the most significant among them, both in terms of its content and approach. It is indispensable for reconstructing the historical developments that occurred in northern India during the later part of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century. Its first Persian text was published in 1862 by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal as a part of its Bibliotheca Indica Series. This volume was prepared and edited by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (the famous founder of the Aligarh Movement) after making a comparative study of five manuscripts that were acquired from different sources. The efforts of two other scholars - Captain William Nassau Lees and Maulavi Kabiruddin Ahmad - also went into its publication. Since this volume was published nearly 150 years ago, it had become quite rare. It is true that its copies were available in the libraries of some universities and research institutes. But these had become so brittle with age that they could no longer be handled for consultation. Sir Syed Academy, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh has performed a great service to historical scholarship by bringing out a new edition, which contains features that were absent in the first one - the original preface by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, a scholarly introduction by Prof. Asghar Abbas (Director, Sir Syed Academy) and a comprehensive index by Dr. Muhammad Muatsam Abbasi. While the students of medieval Indian history are delighted to find an invaluable treasure in their hands, it would be appropriate to take a close look at the author and his work.

Ziauddin Barani was born in 1285 at the medieval town of Baran (modern Bulandshahr) in a family which was intimately associated with the administration of the Delhi Sultanate. His maternal grandfather Sipahsalar Husamuddin served as the chamberlain (*vakil-i-dar*) of Malik Bektars, the court master (*barbak*) of Sultan Ghiasuddin Balban and the police chief (*Shahna*) of Lakhnauti during Balban's military expedition to Bengal. His father Malik Maiyuddin Mulk worked as deputy (*naib*) for prince Arkali Khan, the son of Sultan Jalaluddin Khalji and was appointed as the administrator (*naib-o-khwaja*) of Baran during the reign of Sultan Alauddin

Khalji. His paternal uncle Malik Alaul Mulk was a close associate of Alauddin Khalji and participated in the conspiracy leading to the murder of Jalaluddin Khalji. He was rewarded by the new Sultan with the governorship of Kara and Awadh and was subsequently appointed as the police chief (*kotwal*) of Delhi. Barani appears to have received good education in such subjects as history and religion, with suitable proficiency in Persian and Arabic. He was a close friend of two great poets of the times viz. Amir Khusro and Amir Hasan Sijzi. He remained attached with Shaikh Nizamuddin Auliya as an intimate disciple. In spite of his family connections and learning, Barani could not secure a government job. It was only in 1334 that he managed to enter the court of Muhammad bin Tughluq and remained a courtier and companion (*muqarrab/nadim*) of the sultan for 17 years. On the accession of Firoz Shah Tughluq, the court politics underwent a major change. In consequence, Barani was imprisoned in the Bhatner fort for five months. After his release, he entered the worst phase of his life owing to poverty and ill health. In this state of physical misery and mental frustration, Barani produced several works including *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, *Hasrat Nama* and *Sana-i-Muhammadi*.

Barani commences his narrative from 1265, the point where Minhaj-us-Siraj Juzjani terminates his *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*. He brings the story down to 1356, the sixth regnal year of Firuz Shah Tughluq to whom the work has been dedicated. As such, he covers an eventful period of nearly seven decades when important political developments were witnessed - territorial expansion, centralization of the polity, plebeianization of the nobility and restructuring of the agrarian economy. But for Barani, history meant a linear account of the reigns of eight Sultans - Ghiasuddin Balban, Muizzuddin Kaiqubad, Jalaluddin Khalji, Alauddin Khalji, Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah Khalji, Ghiasuddin Tughluq, Muhammad bin Tughluq and the first six years of the long rule of Firuz Shah Tughluq. Barani treats the reign of every Sultan as an autonomous unit, which was capable of independent historical narration, irrespective of the continuities cutting across the successive reigns. Barani's account of the first three rulers - Balban, Kaiqubad and Jalaluddin Khalji - is not subdivided into chapters. But from the reign of Alauddin Khalji onwards, the account is segmented into several small chapters, each devoted to the description of a particular episode that does not figure in a chronological order.

In keeping with the interests of the contemporary elite classes, Barani pays a considerable attention to the circumstances in which a particular Sultan ascended the throne, with reference to the role of nobility and changing factional politics. This was usually followed by a list of prominent nobles and the distribution of offices and revenue assignments (*iqtas*). The early steps included conciliation of such groups as theologians, mystics and scholars. However a substantial portion of the narrative was

devoted to administrative measures to curtail the power of the nobility, changes in the land revenue system, the threat of Mongols and the incorporation of fresh areas in the Delhi Sultanate. Among the achievements of the reigning Sultan, the author enumerates the construction of buildings in the capital as well as his visible acts of charity.

The above pattern is manifested in Barani's account of the reign of Balban, the basic information about which was acquired from elders who had themselves witnessed several tumultuous happenings. Since Balban was acutely conscious of the threat posed by the nobility, he took decisive steps to strengthen the monarchy, drawing freely from the model of Sassanian Persia. He struck terror in the minds of the nobles by instituting a spy system and severe punishments. He undertook punitive measures against such local elements as the Khokhars of Koh-i-Jud, the Meos of Mewat and the rebellious peasantry of Doab, Rohilkhand and Katehar. Barani highlights the policy of massacres, cutting of jungles, construction of forts, the establishment of Afghan garrisons, the enslavement of rebels and the confiscation of cattle. But Barani makes no attempt to conceal the unprecedented cruelty that accompanied such military operation in the unpacified countryside. Employing the same candid approach, Barani describes the political degeneration of Kaiqubad's reign, the attitude of nobles towards the policies of Jalaluddin Khalji, the price control regulations of Alauddin Khalji, the land revenue reforms of Ghiasuddin Tughluq and the controversial schemes of Muhammad bin Tughluq in the midst of widespread political unrest. However Barani treats the reign of Firuz Shah Tughluq as an exception, when all previous contradictions disappear and state power is directed towards universal conciliation, patronage of learned classes and public utility works.

Apart from his concern with the policies of the Delhi Sultans, Barani recognizes the role of high-ranking nobles and lower bureaucracy with reference to their social origins. The long drawn out conflict within the nobility culminated in the domination of Turks during the reign of Balban. The Khalji revolution signalled the entry of non-Turkish elements in a big way, without aiming at a complete purge of the Turks. This process continued unabated during the Tughluq rule, when the nobility became heterogeneous to such an extent that the question of ethnic domination did not arise. A similar trend, if Barani is relied upon, was witnessed among the lower rung petty functionaries. Of course, Iltutmish and Balban were said to have frowned upon the recruitment of low-born persons even to minor government jobs. The fundamental changes in the land revenue system, which were introduced by Alauddin Khalji, created employment opportunities on such a large scale that it was no longer possible to confine public appointments to socially superior groups. It appears that the so-called low-born persons, who entered the lower rungs of administration during the

Khalji period, earned promotions to acquire higher positions in the nobility during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq. This particular trend undermined the future of several prosperous families, which had been hitherto entrenched safely in lucrative jobs. This explains the unrestrained opposition of Barani towards the social elevation of plebeian groups through education and service.

We must hasten to point out that Barani does not always narrate historical facts in an impartial and dispassionate manner. He does not hesitate to inject his personal prejudice in the narrative, both directly and indirectly. For example, he portrays the conflict between Khusro Khan and Ghiasuddin Tughluq in religious colours. He would have us believe that the former aimed at establishing Hindu rule in the capital and sought to wipe out the Islamic religious practices. In actual fact, the tussle was purely political. Muslim and Hindu nobles were found on both sides of the fluid political fence. The adherents of the Khalji regime regarded Khusro Khan as a usurper and aimed at reviving the old political order, which they succeeded in doing without any appeal to religious sentiments. Elsewhere, Barani has employed an ingenious device to articulate his personal opinions through the men who were no longer alive i.e. he has put his own words in the mouths of historical characters. He has done this while recording the alleged conversations between the sultans and their advisers - between Iltutmish and Saiyyid Nuruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi, between Ghiasuddin Balban and his sons, between Jalaluddin Khalji and Ahmad Chap, and so on. It is quite possible that these conversations never took place and Barani has merely fabricated the dialogues for the two persons only to accord legitimacy and currency to his own controversial views. We are induced to nurture this suspicion because Barani presents these views as his own in another work viz. *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, a treatise on political theory.

Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* yields invaluable information that enables us to reconstruct the process of political centralization. If we consolidate the facts scattered across the entire body of the chronicle, it emerges that the Delhi Sultanate had surely embarked on the path of centralization, which was manifested in new modes of assessment and collection of the land tax. The work under review constitutes our only source on this vital aspect of state formation, though the somewhat ambiguous language often causes confusion. We learn that even a strong and efficient ruler like Balban was helpless against the abuses that had crept into the system of revenue assignments. In due course, the Delhi Sultanate discarded the policy of extracting irregular tributes from local chiefs and assumed the stupendous task of direct collection of land tax from the peasantry. In fact, it was during the reign of Alauddin Khalji (1296-1316) that the entire land revenue system was overhauled. Area under cultivation was measured, agricultural produce per unit of area was determined, local prices were

calculated and the state share was expressed in cash. The role of intermediaries - local chiefs and village headmen - was minimized. In areas given as revenue assignments, the land tax was collected in cash, while in the crown lands (*khalisa*) it was collected in kind, so that the state could regulate the supply and price of foodgrains. A wide range of statistics was recorded in the account books at the village level. It became possible to employ a large number of petty functionaries— assessors, collectors, clerks and writers - who possessed the knowledge of the local language, Persian, accounts and writing. At the same time, it became possible for socially inferior groups - settled in cities and towns - to acquire the required skills and take up petty government jobs.

During the post-Alauddin Khalji period, several essential features of the above reforms were discontinued because the state institutions failed to bear the increased administrative burden and the peasantry failed to meet the oppressive state demands. Ghiasuddin Tughluq, in spite of his short reign, undertook a detailed review of the system. Adopting a more practical approach, he reformed the system at three levels- peasantry, revenue assignees and intermediaries. He advocated a graduated increase in the magnitude of state share, offered the benefit of agricultural improvement to the cultivators and provided automatic relief in the event of crop failure. However Muhammad bin Tughluq imposed a dramatic increase of land tax in the Doab, so that the peasants resorted to a violent insurrection and abandoned their villages. The state undertook punitive measures that resulted in unprecedented cruelty and bloodshed. Despite his proximity to the Sultan, Barani provides an accurate and authentic account of these developments.

Barani has turned out to be the only contemporary writer to have taken such keen interest in the agrarian economy of northern India. We learn from him that the ruling class, having experienced the devastating impact of the long famine (1334-41), adopted the policy of state intervention in agricultural production. Muhammad bin Tughluq established the *Diwan-i-Amir Kohi* with the specific purpose of rehabilitating agriculture. He implemented an ambitious scheme involving distribution of liberal loans, bringing uncultivated land under the plough, digging of wells and a change in the cropping pattern. Though the scheme ended in a miserable disaster, the basic principle of state intervention was retained. Firuz Shah Tughluq shifted the focus of attention from the Doab to south-east Punjab and laid a network of canals for irrigating the dry tracts extending up to the newly established town of Hissar Firuza. Barani does not provide answers to several questions related to this subject - the route followed by the canals, the nature of financial investment, the role of local communities and the mode of state control. Though it was not possible for him to experience the positive consequences flowing out of the scheme, yet he has tried to

visualize the anticipated socio-economic transformation in the south-east Punjab.

In consequence of the availability of artificial irrigation, Barani speculates (*Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, Persian text, pp. 567-570), people engaged in pastoralism - who wandered from place to place along with their families and herds - would settle as permanent cultivators. Farmers would be able to raise such superior crops as wheat, gram and sugarcane whereas only lentils and sesame were grown earlier. New villages would be settled. Assignment holders (*muqtis*) would succeed in collecting the land tax regularly. People would be able to consume superior foods - wheat, gram and sugar - which were enjoyed earlier only on festive occasions and which had to be brought all the way from Delhi and its neighbourhood. The surplus produce of these commodities would be transported to deficit areas for commercial purposes. People would be able to travel across the arid tract without carrying their usual stock of drinking water. They would also be able to travel in boats through the canals that were fifty or sixty *kos* in length. A virtual desert, where nothing grew except acacia and thorny bushes, would be covered with gardens where a great variety of fruits and flowers would grow. Birds and animals would not perish for want of water. It is such insightful and fascinating passages that have raised Barani head and shoulders above several contemporary writers.

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BOOK REVIEW-II

Guru Granth Sahib Over to the West: Idea of Sikh Scripture's Translations 1810-1909, by Dr Nazer Singh, (ISBN 81-311-0019-7), Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi: 2005, pp. VIII+136, Price Rs. 350/-.

The main body of the book consists of six research articles written and published on different occasions but bound together by a common theme relating to the translations of the Sikh scriptures into English. This perhaps is the rationale behind putting them together in book form. In addition to these articles the book also includes seven 'Appendices' comprising mainly official correspondence, now preserved in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, relating to the 'Translation Project' of the Sikh scriptures into English at the various levels of administration during the period studied by the author. Although the book is mainly concerned with the British discovery of the Sikhs and their scriptures and their endeavour to compile the history of the Sikhs and translate their scriptures, the theme broadly falls within the limits of what may be called 'Punjab Orientalism.'

According to Bhai Gurdas, a renowned Sikh savant of seventeenth century, Guru Nanak informed the learned Yogis of the Himalayas that his mission has the sustenance of the Holy Word and the Holy community and nothing else. Divinely inspired Word or *Gurbani* and the Holy congregation (Gur-Sangat) founded by Guru Nanak thus are the basic pillars on which his mission stands. Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Guru before his passing away bestowed the Guruship of the Khalsa (Sangat) on *Guru Granth* and *Guru Panth*. The Sikh scripture and the Sikh community are thus inextricably intertwined to each other. As a result in the area of Sikh studies the Sikh scriptural studies and the Sikh historiography go hand in hand. They can never be fruitfully discussed in isolation from each other. The book under review also takes up the translations of the Sikh scriptures and the Sikh historiography in relation to each other. A combined study of both these aspects makes what has come to be known as the Sikh studies. The area picked up for study and exploration in this book is not the virgin one. It has been studied by the scholars more than once. Some of these studies have come to be recognized as authoritative such as by Ganda Singh, J.S. Grewal, N.G. Barrier, Stephan Dunning, Harbans Singh, G.R. Khurana, S.S. Bal etc.

The conclusions of all these studies are more or less common and uniformly accepted. For instance Malcolm and Cunningham succeeded the latter at the cost of his job and life, Trumpp disappointed and disheartened

the sponsors of his project and the study itself. Not only that he left the Sikhs battered and bruised for many years to come. Macauliffe did make some reparations to the abused and insulted Sikhs but he failed to move the colonial masters to extend their appreciations and patronage to his work completed at the very high cost of his personal financial losses and a very promising I.C.S. career.

Well the area repeatedly ploughed does not put a limit to further explorations. In this context Nazer Singh's study should be a well-come step. His unstinted labours and judicious marshalling of the contemporary evidences have certainly added to the richness of the field. His discerning eye has clearly identified the main players of the 'Translation Project' along with their unhindered, varied motives and the problems and pressures of the situation. The disoriented and disgruntled actors of these times also have inspired the growth of Sikh studies, although by their negative contributions.

Nazer Singh being a dedicated and devoted historian of the Medieval Punjab laboured hard to trace evidence for every commonly cherished opinion regarding the 'Translation Project' from the contemporary records by sifting through the piles of old official records preserved at various archives. Going through the pages of this book one never gets this impression that the author is following the lead of this or that authority. It appears to be an altogether fresh attempt at re-examining the evidences of the prevailing, long held convictions. This aspect of the present study needs to be deeply appreciated and loudly applauded. Some repetitions are bound to occur in the research papers written at different times but relating to the common theme. Such repetitions are found in this book also. In my personal view, chapter devoted to Shardha Ram Phalauri should have been altogether omitted or mentioned in the footnote. Also the learned scholar should have paid a little more attention to avoid printing mistakes that have entered into all the pages right from the opening page. The production of the book is impressive but the price seems to be beyond the reach of student community or young scholars in the field who are more likely to be benefited from this study.

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BOOK REVIEW-III

***Political Memoirs of an Indian Revolutionary Naina Singh Dhoot*, by Surinder Singh (translation and annotation), Manohar, New Delhi, 2005, pp. VI+357, Price Rs. 895/-.**

The Memoirs tells the story of an Indian patriot and Punjab communist namely Naina Singh of village Dhoot Kalan in Hoshiarpur Zilla. Penned by a professional academics the work is a piece of oral history of national and revolutionary movement as represented by the C.P.I. till 1964 and by the C.P.M. thereafter. Naina Singh (born 1904) joined this movement by the middle of 1930's and served it upto 1986-87. The movement was indeed anti-imperialist in nature. Naina Singh's recollections of this anti-British struggle as well as his own endeavour in this regard and its account make the central theme of the book. As to the endeavour itself, it was aimed at transferring power to the peasants and workers in north India.

Yet the work under consideration is something more than the story of an individual. In addition to being autobiographical, the book is historiographical. What makes it so are : (1) a fifty five page INTRODUCTION by the translator, and (2) equally substantial Notes and References that follow each of the ten chapters, and are spread over 53 pages in all. Put together these more than a hundred pages comprise one fourth of the printed work. This material by Surinder Singh had enhanced the research value of the book and makes it more communicating and meaningful.

PREFACE explains the reason for the book to exist. Also, it contains hints about the evidence-sources both human and material-employed. Moreover, it shows the author's method and inclinations. He emerges as a sincere seeker after historical truth. Person and Age of Naina Singh becomes self-evident and this feature alone goes a long way to explain the very informative book Dr. Surinder Singh had crafted.

Split into three parts INTRODUCTION deals, first, with the origin of communists in Punjab. The transformation of Ghadar by 1919 constitutes a necessary backdrop to the appearance of communist groups in the region. The other factors noticeable here were the role of Comintern, and formation of Kirti Kisan organization (1926-28).

Secondly, the Introduction entertains four 'official' histories of the Kirti Kisan Lehar and the C.P.I. Naina Singh's age is depicted through the writings of his four contemporaries who were also his comrades in arms. They are/were (1) Bhagat Singh Bilgha, (2) G.S. Sahnsara, (3) Chain Singh Chain and (4) Sohan Singh Josh. Here, the most important aspect of the

circumstances of Naina Singh during the 1920's and 1930's was, and should have been, the problematic relationships between the (revived) Ghadar Party, Kirti Lehar and the C.P.I. since 1925. INTRODUCTION under review, however, leaves it to Gurharpal Singh (1994) to identify the cause of tussle and conflict between the Ghadarites and the Kirtis, and the Kirtis and the Communists. In fact this triangular conflict have been located 'in the particularism of Ghadar Kirti Communism' by Surinder Singh (read Gurharpal Singh). We are told that this particularism was shaped by the militant traditions of Sikhism including a negative bias for 'intellectualism', and it was enforced by the Ghadarites' links with the U.S.A. and the Comintern at the same time. Moreover, 'the particularism' had a tendency to persist so much so that it can partly be seen from the 1964 split of the C.P.I. maintains the book (page 25, 31).

Was Kirti Kisan Lehar an Indian version of Ghadar? Were the Ghadar (after 1919) and the Kirti Lehar Marxist-Leninist formations? How does the work under review answer these fundamental questions? Going by the INTRODUCTION the answer ought to be in the positive. But such an answer is remarkably in tune with the one given originally by David Petrie. Strangely it was upheld by Bhagat Singh Bilgha, though Sohan Singh Josh had contested it.

Memoirs shed little light on the central problem of the historiography of the anti-imperialist struggle, namely, how to write its history with the help of police and intelligence sources without being influenced by the political myths they had created to keep the nationalist forces divided. It was the British intelligence headed by men like Petrie that had denominated Kirti Kisan Lehar as the Sikh and communist version of the Ghadar of 1913.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned limitation, *Memoirs* is refreshing in many ways. First, it shows the Punjab studies are a vibrant field. Secondly, it forces us to recognize the political significance and role of Doaba in the post 1849 history of the Punjab. Thirdly, it inspires the reader to see the need to preserve the rich oral evidence related to our modern epic named Freedom Movement. Lastly, the book is directly relevant to understand Punjab politics after 1947. *Memoirs* are indeed a welcome milestone.

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BOOK REVIEW-IV

***The Other Sikhs: A View From Eastern India (Vol.I),* by Himadri Banerjee, Manohar, New Delhi, 2003, pp.279.**

Our perceptions of the Sikh world also underwent a significant change during these years. The Sikhs, so long, projected as archetypes of national heroism and sacrifice in our fight against colonial rule, were increasingly viewed as dangerous forces threatening our life and security. These happenings generated hate campaign against the Sikhs... This prompted the author to write this book in order to know that how the Panthic issues were transmitted to the Sikhs in the eastern parts of India and ultimately their response to them. This object is claim of the author.

In another assertion, it is mentioned that present study seeks to deal with some of these interesting issues recorded in three eastern Indian languages, namely Assamese, Bengali and Oriya published over a century between the First Sikh War (1845) and the partition of India (1947). In the process it outlines the history of the Sikhs and reveals how the message of Sikhism has been perceived in the context of local issues by numerous eastern Indian authors. However, perusal of the book reveals that the author has attempted to project reflections or images of the Sikhs and Sikhism in three eastern Indian languages.

In further profession, it is written that bulk of these writings came from other than professional historians and in the form of poems, short stories, fiction, plays, biographies, travelogues, essays etc. Obviously, these literary writings on Sikhs and Sikhism though provide much interesting information; in actual, these constitute only the 'others view' and hence only the images and certainly not the history of the Sikhs in eastern parts. Moreover, as admitted by the author these literary writings are much influenced by the perceptions of the individuals and also by the happenings of the time.

According to the author, in Bengal the Sikhs and Sikhism were made to be known by the Brahmo literature and it projected life and mission of Guru Nanak –as monotheistic and anti-idolatory. Next it was introduced by Hindu nationalists and Sanatani authors. Militant Hindu ideology shifted the focus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh and projected him as the defender of Hinduism against political oppression and religious injustice. There in indication of political transformation through the institution of Khalsa, but stresses that Sikh Gurus had no plan of setting up a separate religion from that of the Hindus. There is mention of sacrifices of Guru Tegh

Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh alongwith highlighting of post- Guru phase executions of Banda Bahadur, Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Mani Singh and others; and are included in the Hindu martyrology.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign also received distinct Hindu colouring. He is hailed as the last independent Indian sovereign restoring Hindu military might after a gap of nearly 700 years of Muslim rule. The Maharaja is not, however, spared for his failings and deviations from the Hindu way of life. Much of these writings are by Hindu writers where the Muslims have an occasional entry. In the fight against British, Sikh past became important vehicle of nationalism, fascination for the martyrdom of the Sikh Gurus, the Khalsa's readiness to fight for its political freedom, the sufferings of Akali Satyagrahis etc. But some writings also supported the British in their dealings with Maharaja Duleep Singh. There is no mention of the Sikhs during partition.

According to the author, perceptions about Sikh Gurus and some other personalities vary in three languages because local social milieu and cultural experience occasionally imparted a regional flavour of Sikhism. The writings do not reveal that how, when and who transmitted the message of Sikhism in this part of India. The local Sikh milieu, its tenets and traditions, its fight for a distinct identity on certain arenas of social life as well as its syncretic face in relations to the wider host community almost remain an uncharted domain in these writings.

Thus it goes to the credit of the author in providing the 'images' of the Sikhs in the literary writings of the three eastern Indian languages. Moreover, he has been engaged in Sikh/Punjab studies for a long time. But had he taken care of the repetitions, more clarity about the objects of his exercise and a comparison between the 'image' and 'history' and also about using the word 'other Sikhs' when study reveals nothing of the sort rather an outsider's view of images of the Sikhs in those writings, would have certainly added to the enhancement of author's image in Sikh Studies. In fact what the author attempted to establish is equally true to non-Sikh communities who had to face the pressure of different politico-geographical environments.

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BOOK REVIEW-V

***Myth and Reality of the Sikh Militancy in Punjab*, by Dr Joginder Singh, Shri Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2006, pp. V+278, Price Rs. 750/-.**

Nothing is more difficult but urgent than to define the term 'Sikh Militancy' and see through its social and ideological texture to determine its political worth. Originally related to Khalsa and its founder militant Sikhism remained politically relevant upto the 20th century. Both the British colonialism and Indian nationalism dealt with it in their own ways. The very fact that the colonial state as well as the Freedom Movement could, and did, employ the militant traditions of Sikhism showed its complexity including its confusing nature and paradoxical role.

'Sikh Militancy' in its more contemporary form (1978-1992) expressed itself through the failed Congress and the Akalis in the first instance. Secondly, it came as 'an alternate imagery' structured by 'the government and its supporters' against 'the fundamentalists, separatists and secessionist forces' (IV). The Dal Khalsa, National Council of Khalistan, the Babbar Khalsa International, and the Panthic Committee lent these 'forces' the Khalistani agenda pursued by a following of the Damdami Taksal and the Akal Takhat. Golden Temple was used as 'the centre stage of their activity'. More than one Akali faction worked for them. Above all, it was the Sikh youth that took over the cause of militancy to launch it along the communal rails by owning the killings of Hindus. It is precisely the actions of the above mentioned 'Sikh institutions and organizations' that lead Dr. Joginder Singh to describe militancy in Punjab as 'Sikh' (V).

He emphatically says that the political parties, especially, the Congress and Akalis, and the print media played the most crucial role in the making and functioning of the militancy. A considerable portion of INTRODUCTION (1-10 pages) deals with the (vernacular) newspapers in Punjab. The papers were 'communal' before 1947 and most of them remained so after independence. For this reason, *Myth and Reality of Sikh Militancy*, selects *Akali Patrika* and *Ajit* to be its main evidence. We are told that these two Punjabi and Sikh newspapers "interpreted the agenda of *dharam yudh morcha* (since 1982) and the Sikh militancy in the perspective of the Sikh religion and history" (Page 10). Further, it were these organs that blurred the distinction between the plight of Sikhs under the British and the Congress. Moreover, the Sikh identity and its independence was violently asserted against Hinduism. Above all the assertion was exclusively

directed against the Indian state.

Doing all this, these newspapers had their own axe to grind. Both partition and the formation of Punjabi state had helped them to have an enhanced image and readership among the Sikhs. Why should they not have stood by the sectarian Akalis or the Congress after 1966? For the same reason, these stood by the Sikhs in face of the Sikh-Nirankari clash (1978) and for the defence of Anandpur Sahib Resolution. The communalization of the secular issues like the water and territorial disputes was their making (p.17). Lastly, it was these papers that projected the Khalistanis and defended the gun-wielding youth by calling them *Khadkus* and *Shaheeds* (p.22).

Interestingly, the same newspapers were the first to discuss the causes of the failure of the Sikh militancy by the early 1990's. It was confessed that the fourth estate itself failed to discharge its duty towards the civil society. The confession was in no way rejection of the militancy and its reason to exist. Contrary, it was an attempt to legitimize the militants of all hues (See chapters 5 and 6). More news organs in the Punjab and Punjabi appeared and joined *Ajit* and *Akali Patrika* in this undertaking.

Further this self-criticism was directed against the individuals and the political parties especially the *organized Left*. It became a fashion to talk about the communist infiltration in the Sikh institutions and concerns. Many a Sikh intellectuals took upon themselves the task of purging the S.G.P.C. and the Akali Dal from the Nationalists and Leftists. These Sikh critics sought to transform the Akali Dal by dropping 'the traditional Akalis'. These neo-Akalis talked like the *Dalit* and naxal agitators. Some of their leaders and thinkers had a police background. Radicalism of Sukhjinder Singh and Simranjit Singh Mann failed to save the Sikhs or Punjab from the Hindu or Mannuwadi Indian Government or the Congress. But it certainly succeeded in disrupting the Congress, Akali Dal and the Left, and made the way for the B.S.P. and B.J.P. Long spells of central rule in the Punjab was another gift of the Khalistani terrorists and the neo-Akalis.

The remarkable quality of *Myth and Reality of the Sikh Militancy* is its defiance to conclusion. It ends with a question mark. The text is confessedly a product of the newspapers. It reads as a massive *akhbar*. All this is in tune with the classic tradition of Sikh Studies where History was an alternate to theology but not without a theological and political function. Modern Sikhs say that Politics and Religion are one in Sikhism. Doing so they maintain that History and Theology are inseparable. The concept of *Shaheedi* is the one where the two meet most effectively. Glorification of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his tribe to the level of worship could not and did not occur through the Sikh Scripture but the same had been achieved through his association with the Darbar Sahib. More than this it stood secured through the reporting about him after the Blue Star Operation. It was

a reporting grounded in Sikh martial and the 18th century political history (pp: 262-63). There were many more devices to reinforce this exercise such as an Akal Takhat Hukamnama recognizing them as martyrs in the cause of *gurdhams* and their defence. In secular terms the glorification of violent means to achieve *Panth di Azad Hasti* serves the same purpose. Sikh Militancy had been both revolutionary and counter- revolutionary.

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BOOK REVIEW-VI

***Foreigners at the Court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, by Devinder Kumar Verma, Arun Publication, Patiala, 2006, pp. IV+98, Price Rs. 250/-**

Where do the Colonial historiography meet the Sikh Studies? It do so in an area of study covering the period of Indian History from Lord Wellesley (1798-1805) to Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856). While dealing with Punjab after 1798, the Colonial as well as Sikh/Punjab writers treat Sikh-Afghan confrontations as the exclusive concern as if the Mughals and Marathas had nothing to do with her. The book under review recognizes the presence of the Foreigners (read the Europeans including the Americans) around the Punjab before Ranjit Singh, but over-looks its implications for Sikh Polity. They were in 'the Mughal Maratha Service' spread over north India as well as the Nizam's Deccan areas. True that many a French-men were active in this 'service' but 'the service' as such was controlled by the British especially after the fall of Tippu in 1799 and the joining of Subsidiary system by the Nizam. Scindia's French General, Perron, was committed to the British much before the fall of Delhi and Hissar into the British hands in September 1803. Desai's *New History of the Marathas* shows that Europeans in the services of Poona and Hyderabad were 'Adventurers' or the mercenaries i.e. they had no Nationality or concern with India. Devoid of Patriotism, the defence of Indian States in their hands was the most risky. They were not expected to stand by the Indian *Rajas* and *nawabs* against the British. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was aware of this reality. Under him the Italians and French could administer the Sikh army but not control it. Was his control over them complete?

The Punjab Historians see the European adventurers through the Persian and English sources. These sources present them as useful, brave and intelligent. Love of the lucre was their only weakness maintain these sources. An important work in Punjabi appearing in 1946 simply called them *Bedeshi Karendey* (Foreign functionaries). Prem Singh of Hoti Mardan did not call them 'adventurers'. Why this defence of the adventurers. This defence had become glorification of them at the hands of Lafont Jean Marie (1986) who took upon himself the task of establishing a new historiography aimed at highlighting the role of France and her nationals in checking the British imperialism in the Indian sub-continent. Adventurers were 'Administrators' for Lafont.

Dr. Devinder Kumar Verma had served the cause of Punjab (Sikh

history) by spending the best part of his life in the service of Punjab Historical Studies Department at Patiala. He had the advantage of having himself trained under Dr. Ganda Singh. His book under review is the work of many a years. Unlike Lafont, he has no high claims to make. Very humbly he suggests the purpose of his book by writing :

Although valuable research work has been done on the works and achievements of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, yet a separate and systematic study of the foreigners in his court has not been undertaken by the scholars hitherto. The proffered work is an attempt to fill up this gap.....

(Preface).

Dr. Verma's attempt is well made. With the help of huge evidence he had been able to identify the highest number of Foreigners so far in the Lahore Kingdom. The number is sixty two. Much of the Monograph is devoted to Ventura, Allard, Avitable and Court. Chapter No. six is devoted to the military and non-military role of the Foreigners and their difficulties of adjustment to the Punjabi ways.

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BOOK REVIEW-VII

Biographical Sketches of Modern Indian Historic Personalities, 18th-19th Centuries. A.D., by Dr. Rattan Amol Singh Sidhu. Unistar Books Pvt. Ltd., Chandigarh, 2006, pp. 156, Price Rs. 295/-.

The book under review is based on a few limited sources. In fact the author introduces historic persons and the details retrieved from the sources to write as many as fifty historical biographies. Dr. Sidhu has attempted to trace out the dates of their births and deaths, but where confirmed dates could not be located, only introducing life sketches have been presented. Some of these biographies have been written by getting material from various reference sources and these references have been made part of the relevant biographies. The author makes sincere effort to acquaint the readers with these introducing biographies.

Thus the present work is a collection of unforgettable memories of some prominent but forgotten historic personalities of Indian history during the 18th and 19th centuries A.D. Some of the personalities about whom the author has written, occupy very important place and position in Modern Indian history during the period of above mentioned centuries. Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal, Bibi Sahib Kaur, Daulat Rao Sindhia, Ghulam Qadir Rohilla, Haider Ali of Mysore, Mahadaji Sindhia, Mir Qasim, etc. are well known historic figures where as Ambaji Ingolia, Daulat Ram Haldia, Karam Singh Nirmala of Shahbad, Lakwa Dada, Rana Chhatar Singh, Rane Khan, Najaj Quli Khan, etc. are very less known but their place, position and role played in their life times were not insignificant. They left some imprint on the happenings of their times. Though Dr. Rattan himself admits that only a few reliable primary and other published sources are available, yet the present work would be useful to the students and scholars of History for the purpose of the historical research. Lastly, the book is written in a garnishing style so that the given biographies become not only interesting but meaningful to read like a manner to enjoy by slightly touch of the Mango-type breast. However, this work is semi or like Google Research, in a synchronology and cryptography manner type work. To sum up, let me say that half of the given personalities are not covered even in the Who is Who or Dictionary Project on the Freedom fighters, completed under the supervision of Dr. S.P. Sen, in the Institute of Historical Studies, Calcutta. So,

this work would help the young scholars to pick up a few personalities and explore the related primary source material to understand the history of India of the said two centuries.

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